

MAHITHI MONTHLY SNIPPETS

MAY 2024

NAMMAKPSC SPECIAL EDITION



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NEWS IN SHORT

- The Thermal Camera Technology, developed by CDAC Thiruvananthapuram under MeitY's InTranSE Program, was transferred to M/s Aditya Infotech (CP Plus) for commercial applications. It's designed for Smart cities, Industries, Defence, and Health, featuring an AI-based Data Processing Unit (DPU) and validated for Road traffic. Additionally, the launch of an ITS Technology/Product Booklet under the same program focused on Traffic control, Public Transit, Road Safety, and Traffic Applications, aiming at awareness creation. The technology transfer event witnessed the presence of key officials and industry leaders.
- Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) achieved 'Navratna status' from the Department of Public Enterprises, offering new financial and operational benefits
- The GI tag is awarded to Kutch Ajrakh, a textile art form from Gujarat with deep cultural roots. Ajrakh involves intricate hand-block printing on cotton fabric, symbolizing elements like the sky, land/fire, and stars. The GI tag ensures authenticity and protects against misuse, highlighting the craft's historical and geographical significance.
- India launches Project ISHAN to unify airspace regions, improving air traffic management nationwide. AAI, under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, manages civil aviation infrastructure and provides ATMS over Indian airspace
- The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is experiencing its largest Mpox outbreak, caused by the monkeypox virus. Mpox is a viral zoonotic disease with two known types, symptoms including skin rash, fever, and muscle aches, and transmission via human-to-human contact. There are no specific treatments, with early supportive care being vital for managing symptoms
- Flying Wedge, a Bengaluru-based defense firm, has unveiled its latest bomber UAV, the FWD-200B. This MALE UAV features optical surveillance, missile-like weapons, a 100 kg fuel capacity, and impressive specs: 370 kmph speed, 12-20 hours endurance, 6m length, 8m wingspan, 498 kg max take-off weight, operating at 9,000 ft altitude.
- INCOIS in Hyderabad issued a warning about high-energy swell waves affecting coastal states. Swell waves originate from distant storms, have unique characteristics, and can reach up to 700 meters in severe cases. Kerala is on red alert due to these waves, locally known as 'Kallakadal,' prompting safety measures.
- The Indian Navy is modernizing its warships through a conversion program, with INS Beas as the flagship project transitioning to diesel propulsion for extended operational life and improved maintenance. Indigenous marine diesel engine development under Make-I category is a priority, with collaborations with companies like Kirloskar Oil Engines Ltd and GRSE in progress.
- Reporters Without Borders (RSF) noted a global decline in press freedom, with a significant drop in the World Press Freedom Index. India's press freedom score decreased, although its rank improved marginally due to declines in other countries. Factors affecting press freedom in India include political influence and harassment campaigns against critical journalists. RSF also highlighted concerns about press freedom in countries with upcoming elections, particularly pointing out issues in the U.S
- The Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium (JNP) has launched a 'telescope library' programme aimed at popularizing science among educational institutions and the public. The programme allows institutions and individuals to borrow telescopes, binoculars, and gnomons for a specified period to use at their locations
- Madrid Tennis Open: Iga Swiatek beats Aryna Sabalenka
- The iconic Cauvery theatre in Bengaluru recently closed its doors after celebrating its golden jubilee just three weeks earlier. It marked the end of an era for many longtime moviegoers in the city. Cauvery theatre opened its doors on January 11, 1974, with the screening of the Dr. Rajkumar

starrer "Bangarada Panjara." Over the years, it became a beloved destination for movie enthusiasts during the heyday of single-screen cinemas

- The BBMP reinstates randomisation system for bill clearance due to challenges faced by the Nagamohan Das Commission
- Tamil Nadu government launches an e-Pass portal for visiting Nilgiris and Kodaikanal hill stations
- The Koothandavar festival, held in Koovagam, Tamil Nadu during the Tamil month of Chithirai, is an 18-day event steeped in tradition that celebrates the transgender identity. It gained global attention for its unique rituals and historical significance, including the story of Aravan offering himself as a sacrifice in the Tamil Mahabharata and Lord Krishna marrying him in the form of Mohini. The festival's focal point is Lord Aravan's sacrificial ritual, with transwomen coming together on the 17th day to wed Lord Aravan, followed by his symbolic sacrifice the next day, marking a significant cultural and religious observance
- The Integrated Pensioners' Portal launched by the Centre, in collaboration with Bank of India, aims to digitalize pension services by combining processing and payment from multiple banks, offering features like accessing pension slips, life certificates, Form 16 submission, and integrating with the Bhavishya portal. The Bhavishya platform ensures end-to-end digitization, providing progress updates via SMS/email, while CPENGRAMS facilitates grievance redressal.
- Researchers from Linköping University in Sweden have developed 'goldene,' a one-atom thick sheet of gold with unique properties, including being 100 nanometers thick, making it promising for applications in the electronics industry as a catalyst and for various other purposes like carbon dioxide conversion and water purification
- China's Chang'e-6 mission aims to bring back samples from the Moon's far side, focusing on the South Pole-Aitken basin for insights into the Moon's internal structure. This follows China's successful Chang'e-4 mission in 2019, which achieved a soft landing on the far side
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) recently got its second C295 aircraft out of the planned 56. These planes, designed by Airbus, are versatile, with capabilities including troop transport, cargo handling, and surveillance. The C295 has a flight endurance of 13 hours, can carry up to nine tonnes or 71 troops, and operates in diverse weather conditions. India's acquisition includes an industrial partnership with Airbus delivering the first 16 aircraft, while Tata Advanced Systems (TASL) will manufacture the remaining 40 in India
- IN-SPACe released NGP for implementing ISP 2023, aiming for a predictable regulatory regime and private sector involvement. NGP lists authorized space activities, specifies criteria, and mandates authorization for entities within India's jurisdiction. ISP 2023 institutionalizes private sector participation, encourages investment in space infrastructure, targets a 10% share in the global space economy, defines roles for ISRO, NSIL, and IN-SPACe, allowing ISRO to focus on R&D
- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully conducted the first ignition trial of a semi-cryogenic pre-burner at its ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) in Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu. This achievement marks a crucial step in the development of a 2,000 kN thrust semi-cryogenic engine, which is set to enhance the payload capability of ISRO's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mk III (LVM3) and power future launch vehicles
- Sanjaya Kumar Mishra sworn in as GST Tribunal President
- KSTDC is launching a horti-tourism initiative to capitalize on the popularity of ecotourism and agri-tourism. The initiative aims to educate youth on farming methods and will cultivate both traditional and exotic plant species.
- Groww Mutual Fund launched India's first Nifty Non-Cyclical Consumer Index Fund, aiming for long-term capital growth through 30 resilient companies that perform well during economic downturns, known as defensive stocks
- The PRS Legislative Research's "Annual Review of State Laws 2023" highlights issues like budget passage without discussion, disparities in PAC operations, variations in legislative efficiency, and proposes measures for better governance and accountability in Indian state legislatures.

- The CII has introduced a corporate governance charter for startups with features like structured guidance, timeless principles, and a self-assessment scorecard. Recent trends show a focus on governance due to legal battles and investor scrutiny, emphasizing the need for accountability in the startup ecosystem.
- To revive the population of tigers in Sahyadri Tiger Reserve (STR) — the lone tiger reserve in the Maharashtra western region — the state’s forest department will soon translocate tigers from Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) in Chandrapur district
- The First Southern Star Army Synergia Conclave, 2024 held in Bengaluru aimed to provide a platform for various stakeholders like industry, start-ups, innovators, venture capitalists, and defence PSUs to understand future conflict dynamics, align technologies, and explore defence sector opportunities. Organized by the Indian Army’s Southern Command, Dakshin Bharat Area, and Synergia Foundation, the conclave included key participants from the National Security Advisory Board and National Security Council of the Government of India, focusing on establishing institutional mechanisms, forming partnerships, and initiating research projects in areas like cybersecurity, quantum encryptions, artificial intelligence, aerospace, defence, satellites, space, and advanced computing
- English player Kyren Wilson won the world snooker championship held at Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, England
- Choline is an essential nutrient crucial for cell structure, liver health, a healthy nervous system, and overall metabolic functions. It is transported into the brain by the FLVCR2 protein and must be obtained from the diet as the body produces insufficient amounts on its own. Rich dietary sources include meat, fish, dairy, eggs, as well as certain fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Choline deficiency can lead to various health issues, emphasizing its importance in maintaining overall well-being
- State-owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is set to deploy 4G services nationally starting August 2024, utilizing entirely home-grown technology. This initiative aligns with India’s “Atmanirbhar Bharat” policy aimed at boosting domestic capability and reducing reliance on foreign technologies
- A series of COVID-19 variants within the Omicron JN.1 lineage, known as FLiRT, including the KP.2 and KP 1.1 variants, is rapidly spreading in the United States
- The World Bank has pledged Rs 3,000 crore for water management and flood mitigation initiatives in Bengaluru. The loan will be divided between the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) - Rs 2,000 crore for BBMP and Rs 1,000 crore for BWSSB
- Kohima Peace Memorial, funded by Japan, inaugurated after eight decades to honor the Naga-Japan partnership and commemorate victims of the Battle of Kohima during World War II, symbolizing a journey from conflict to advocating peace and brotherhood.
- ICAR-NBFGR discovered a new catfish species in the pristine waters of Arunachal Pradesh, India and named it as Glyptothorax punyabratai.
- The Tirthahalli variety of arecanut has been identified as the best in Karnataka based on an analysis conducted by the Areca Research Centre at Keladi Shivappa Nayaka University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences in Shivamogga. This variety stood out for its quality, as assessed by a diverse group including consumers, traders, scholars, scientists, and growers. The analysis considered factors like appearance, taste, and aroma. Additionally, opinions of Tirthahalli farmers were taken into account, highlighting the quality of their produce and its suitability for high-grade arecanuts.
- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) released new dietary guidelines urging people to avoid protein supplements, reduce salt intake, and steer clear of ultra-processed foods. Emphasizing natural food sources, the guidelines advocate for balanced diets, home-made recipes for children, and debunk myths about microwave cooking and different salts. They stress the risks of ultra-processed foods and promote healthy diets and physical activity to combat diseases.

- Recent reports from Kerala's health department highlight cases of West Nile fever in three districts, caused by the West Nile Virus (WNV). The virus, transmitted primarily through infected mosquitoes, can lead to severe neurological diseases in humans. Although there is no specific treatment or vaccine, management involves supportive care to alleviate symptoms and prevent complications.
- India surpassed Japan to become the world's third-largest solar power producer in 2023, with solar energy contributing significantly to its electricity generation. The rapid growth of solar power globally, outpacing coal, indicates its pivotal role in decarbonizing electricity. India aims to triple its renewable capacity by 2030, aligning with global efforts for clean energy solutions.
- Researchers utilized CRISPR-Cas9 technology to restore vision in individuals with Leber congenital amaurosis (LCA), a rare genetic disorder causing blindness at birth due to retinal cell malfunction. The breakthrough involved a trial named "BRILLIANCE," where participants received a CRISPR gene therapy called EDIT-101, which corrected the CEP290 gene mutation responsible for LCA.
- Cary Fowler and Geoffrey Hawtin, recipients of the 2024 World Food Prize, are honored for their pivotal roles in creating a global seed vault to protect agricultural diversity. Their initiative, initiated around 2004, aimed to safeguard over 6,000 crop varieties from political and environmental threats, contributing significantly to addressing global hunger. They will share a USD 500,000 award for their critical work in advancing crop biodiversity.
- The recent study revealed that dice snakes have a unique defense mechanism of faking their own death when attacked by predators, employing a theatrical display that includes oozing "mouthfuls" of blood. These nonvenomous snakes, also known as water snakes, are mainly found in Eurasia, including Egypt, and prefer habitats near water bodies and grasslands. Despite their interesting behavior, they face threats such as habitat loss, pollution, roadkill, persecution, and collection for the pet trade, although their conservation status according to the IUCN Red List is currently "Least Concern."
- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) recently organized a groundbreaking initiative called the "Telecom Design Collaboration Sprint," bringing together 15 startups, academia, and research institutions. This collaborative effort focused on deep-tech rapid ideation and solution development to pave the way for a future-ready telecom ecosystem. The initiative aimed to leverage collective strengths, foster holistic solutions, and create market opportunities, with a strong emphasis on advancing towards 6G technology. This pioneering effort reflects DoT's commitment to nurturing innovation and fostering industry collaboration, positioning India's telecommunications sector for global leadership in the 5G era and beyond.
- Karnataka is intensifying efforts to tackle the annual loss of 70-75 lives due to lightning strikes, driven partly by climate change. Recent data shows a potential escalation in cases, with 17 incidents reported since April compared to last year's 66 cases. Most fatalities occur in rural areas, affecting farmers, cattle grazers, fishermen, laborers, and children. Men face a higher risk due to their exposure during outdoor activities. The government is implementing preventive measures, including awareness campaigns and identifying vulnerable regions, particularly in North Karnataka.
- The 'Bandipur Yuva Mitra' initiative, launched in 2023 with a focus on villages near the Bandipur Tiger Reserve, has secured a spot in the Indian Book of Records. The program aims to engage local stakeholders for effective conservation by adopting a learning-by-exploring approach for underprivileged students. It involves over 800 government schools, 30 colleges, benefiting around 10,000 students annually. The program's community engagement and partnerships involve a 'Teacher to child, child to child, child to parents, parents to community' approach and include collaboration with UNDP, UNEP, and other donors for realizing Sustainable Development Goals.
- Google DeepMind has launched AlphaFold3, its latest version of the AlphaFold AI model, with a focus on improving drug discovery and disease targeting. Key features include precise molecular mapping, accurate prediction of protein interactions, generation of 3D molecular structures, and modeling chemical modifications. The impact includes reduced time and cost in developing

treatments, a free online tool for testing hypotheses (AlphaFold server), and improved accessibility for non-commercial researchers since 2021, fostering collaboration and innovation in the scientific community.

- The Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) in Ludhiana has developed a biocontrol agent, *Trichoderma asperellum* (2% WP), registered against foot rot in Basmati rice crops. Foot rot is caused by *Fusarium verticillioides*, spreading through roots and causing yellowing and drying of seedlings. Current management practices include preventive measures and chemical treatments like *Trichoderma harzianum* and Sprint 75 WS. PAU's biocontrol agent is eco-friendly, effective, and developed through joint efforts, reducing yield loss and soil toxicity, with successful experimental results
- The Spices Board has introduced stringent guidelines to prevent ethylene oxide (EtO) contamination in exported spices from India, emphasizing the avoidance of EtO use, testing for EtO contamination, implementing preventive measures, and ensuring microbial contaminant control throughout the supply chain to maintain product safety and quality
- India voted in favor of a draft UN General Assembly resolution supporting Palestine's full membership in the United Nations, stating that Palestine is qualified and should be admitted as a full member. The resolution received 143 votes in favor, including India's, with nine against and 25 abstentions. This move reflects India's stance in support of Palestine's status at the UN and calls for the Security Council to reconsider the matter favorably based on this determination.
- The government has officially implemented the Inter-Services Organisations (ISOs) (Command, Control, and Discipline) Act, granting Commanders-in-Chief and Officers-in-Command of ISOs the authority to maintain discipline and administration among Service personnel. This Act aims to streamline processes, prevent redundant proceedings, and foster greater integration within the armed forces personnel, especially as the Indian military prepares for reorganisation into integrated theatre commands
- The Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) recently introduced a new high-yielding wheat seed variety, HD 3386.
- Karnataka's plastic waste management struggles include low recycling rates at 57%, generating 44 tonnes daily, with only 74.2% collected. Policy-wise, they banned carry bags in 2016 but face issues with illegal units and banned material imports. The state has 143 recycling units, yet 57.27% of waste is recycled, with non-recyclable plastic going to cement factories as RDF, causing environmental hazards due to toxic additives. Despite KSPCB's enforcement actions, including 53,698 cases, banned plastic remains a challenge, often sourced from neighboring states
- BBMP in response to recent heavy rainfall installed water level gauging sensors at 124 locations, powered by solar energy, transmitting data to KSNDMC and then to BBMP's ICC. The sensors use color codes to indicate safe water levels and flood risks. BBMP's initiatives include RCC walls along stormwater drains, ongoing desilting works, and permanent flood mitigation measures in 74 areas
- The Union Health Ministry issued standardized guidelines for confirming heatstroke and heat-related deaths, aiding hospitals in labeling such deaths and conducting autopsies when necessary. Collaboration with forensic medicine departments is encouraged, and the guidelines stress awareness of climate change risks in increasing heat-related deaths. The aim is to improve hospitals' capacity for evidence-based medical decision-making regarding these deaths.
- The Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA) has adopted a work plan focusing on assessing biofuel potential, drafting policy frameworks, and conducting workshops. India plays a significant role in proposing workstreams, engaging in global forums, and positioning itself as a climate champion. GBA aims to promote biofuel development globally, emphasizing market strengthening, trade facilitation, and sustainable utilization across generations
- ISRO successfully hot-tested a liquid rocket engine designed through Additive Manufacturing (AM) technology at the Iaro Propulsion Complex in Tamil Nadu. The redesigned PS4 engine, used in PSLV's fourth stage and PS1's Reaction Control System, was validated for key performance parameters. Benefits of the redesign include reduced parts, eliminated weld joints, saved raw

material usage, and decreased production time by 60%. Wipro 3D partnered in manufacturing the engine using AM technology

- The FDA authorized gene therapy for sickle cell disease, making it commercially available for the first time. Kendric Cromer, a 12-year-old with sickle cell disease from Washington, is the first commercial patient for Bluebird Bio's gene therapy, involving the modification of bone marrow stem cells to address the genetic disorder over several months.
- India contributed \$500,000 to the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Trust Fund (UNCTF), demonstrating its commitment to combating global terrorism. The UNCTF, established in 2009 and transferred to the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) in 2017, accepts contributions from various entities and utilizes funds for specific global programs. India's contribution will primarily support UNOCT's initiatives in countering financing of terrorism (CFT) and preventing terrorist travel in eastern and southern Africa
- A team from Nitte Mahalinga Adyanthaya Memorial (NMAM) Institute of Technology, Karkala in Udupi emerged victorious at the Boeing National Aeromodelling Competition, showcasing their expertise alongside 2,350 students from 855 institutions across India. Notably, female participation increased to 28% this year, highlighting a positive trend in aviation enthusiasm among women.
- The Karnataka State Action Plan on Climate Change — Version 2 was developed in 2021 and approved by the central government for implementation, aligning with national and international climate commitments. It includes climate analysis at a district level, outlines impacts on sectors like agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forests, and water, and emphasizes both mitigation and adaptation strategies. The plan also includes a roadmap for implementation, financing sources, and institutional arrangements for monitoring progress
- BBMP plans to engage private entities, nonprofits, and citizens in lake maintenance via the "BBMP Community Involvement for Lake Conservation Policy, 2024," pending Karnataka High Court approval. Private entities can fund or partner with BBMP, utilizing Schedule VII of the Companies Act for corporate funding. With 202 lakes under BBMP, focus is on rejuvenation and cost reduction. Proposed activities include installations and creating parks. The implementation process involves proposals to BBMP, engineer supervision, and KTCDD Authority's nod. Positive public feedback emphasizes tripartite agreements for fund and space integrity.
- Justice Brojendra Prasad Katakey's panel appointed by the Meghalaya High Court highlighted slow progress in restoring coal mining damage, particularly from rat-hole mining. The Meghalaya Environment Protection and Restoration Fund (MEPRF) remains largely unutilized despite having substantial funds. Acid mine drainage continues to affect communities near abandoned mines. Recommendations include drone surveys to identify illegal coal deposits, actions against violators, and a call for concerned departments to act promptly for ecological restoration and fund utilization.
- Scientists at ICAR-NBFGR studying sea anemones near Lakshadweep discovered mass bleaching off Agatti Island, signaling environmental stress. Sea anemones are invertebrate aquatic animals with symbiotic relationships, commonly found near corals. Bleaching can disrupt these relationships, impacting marine biodiversity. Agatti Island, part of the Lakshadweep group, relies on fishing as the primary industry and faces concerns about bleaching's impact on marine ecosystems.
- The 19th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) concluded in New York, focusing on political commitments to forest protection and implementing the UN Strategic Plan for Forests (UNSPF) 2017-2030. UNFF, established in 2000 by ECOSOC, promotes sustainable forest management globally, aligning with key international agreements like the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement. The session aimed to foster collaboration and coherence in global forest management efforts.
- BBMP to provide dental care, physiotherapy in PHCs

- The Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) in Kerala is launching an orientation programme for temple priests and staff, titled 'Bhakta Sukhadam Kshetra Darshanam' (Happiness for devotees from temple visit). This initiative aims to improve the courteous behavior of priests and staff towards devotees, enhance the overall experience for visitors, and boost temple revenue by providing proper guidance on conducting special pujas. Former IAS officer M Nandakumar will be conducting training sessions for around 5,000 temple priests and staff across 15 classes, focusing on effective communication, understanding rituals, and traditions to ensure a feel-good experience for devotees and promote a harmonious temple environment.
- State Bank of India (SBI) said it was the first bank to become a trading-cum-clearing (TCM) member at India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX) which deals with trading in precious metals.
- P. Shyaamnikhil became India's 85th Grandmaster by completing his third and final GM norm in the recently-concluded Dubai Police Masters chess tournament
- The 7th edition of India- France Joint Military Exercise SHAKTI commenced held at Umroi, in a fully developed and modern Foreign Training Node in Meghalaya.
- Mammoth, a large CO₂ capture and storage facility, is now operational on an Icelandic volcano by Climeworks. It uses 72 fans to capture 36,000 tonnes of CO₂ annually, burying it underground for carbon sequestration. The location near a geothermal plant aids in powering the facility and extracting CO₂ through chemical filtering. The capture process involves separating CO₂ from steam, compressing it, dissolving in water, and injecting it underground. Mammoth aims to eliminate millions of tonnes of CO₂ by 2030, contributing to global carbon neutrality targets. Challenges include high costs, reliance on renewable energy, but innovations like seawater injection show promise.
- Ramcharitmanas, Panchatantra, and Sahṛdayāloka-Locana enter UNESCO's Memory of the World Asia-Pacific Regional Register, highlighting their cultural significance and preservation. Ramcharitmanas, written by Tulsidas, is a revered work in Hindu literature, offering insights into Indian culture and devotion, and introducing traditions like Ramlila. Panchatantra, an ancient collection of animal fables, has global reach and resonates across cultures, showcasing moral teachings in storytelling. Sahṛdayāloka-Locana by Acharya AnandVardana contributes significantly to Sanskrit poetics, enriching literary understanding and appreciation. UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, initiated in 1992, aims to safeguard humanity's documentary heritage, ensuring access for various purposes.
- India and Iran have signed a 10-year deal for the Shahid Beheshti Terminal of Chabahar Port, involving India Ports Global Limited (IPGL) and the Ports and Maritime Organisation of Iran (PMOI). IPGL will invest \$120 million for port development and extend a credit window worth \$250 million for infrastructural projects, aiming to make Chabahar Port a connectivity hub for India, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Eurasia.
- The 4th Joint Committee meeting reviewed the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA), signed in 2009 during the 7th ASEAN Economic Ministers-India Consultations. The agreement, effective since 2010, is also known as the ASEAN-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA), focusing on physical goods trade and excluding services, which are covered under a separate agreement signed in 2014. ASEAN, established in 1967, comprises 10 member states and aims to promote cooperation and integration across various sectors among its members and with other Asian countries.
- Renowned actress Shabana Azmi was recently honored with the Freedom of the City of London for her remarkable contributions to Indian cinema and her advocacy for women's rights. This prestigious award, steeped in centuries of tradition, recognizes Azmi's outstanding achievements and underscores the impact of cinema and activism in shaping society. Her dedication to positive change through her voice and platform continues to inspire and uplift communities worldwide.
- Bengaluru Traffic Police have taken a proactive step to address the rising number of accidents on the international airport road by installing eight AI-powered speed trap cameras. This move comes in response to data highlighting this corridor as one of the most accident-prone areas over the

past three years, largely due to speeding vehicles. The cameras, equipped to monitor speeds and issue challans for violations automatically, mark a shift towards more efficient and advanced traffic enforcement measures, replacing older technologies like mobile speed detector vehicles.

- HDFC Bank announced the introduction of 'PIXEL', a digital card range targeted at customers characterised by "digital fluency, unique preferences and distinct financial behaviours". "PIXEL is a first-of-its-kind range of digital credit card series that offers seamless app-based issuance, complete digital lifecycle management, user engagement and digital servicing," the lender said. PIXEL will be offered in two variants — PIXEL Play and PIXEL Go
- The strongest geomagnetic storm in over two decades recently hit Earth, causing radio blackouts and extending the northern lights to the southern United States. A geomagnetic storm is a major disturbance of Earth's magnetosphere that occurs when there is a very efficient exchange of energy from the solar wind into the space environment surrounding Earth
- The India-U.S joint exercise in conducting coordinated operations in urban counter terrorism contingencies will conclude in Kolkata.
- Infosys Science Foundation (ISF) has lowered the age limit for Infosys Prize winners to 40, aiming to support early-career researchers. The foundation's goal is to optimize its contribution to India's research ecosystem, encouraging more students to pursue science careers. Additionally, ISF has introduced a separate Economics category and expanded to six prize categories from 2024: Economics, Engineering and Computer Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Life Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, and Physical Sciences.
- IN-SPACe has been honored with the Geospatial World Forum (GWF) Leadership Award in the 'Public Policy: Enabling Industry Development' category. This recognition highlights the agency's role in fostering India's space sector growth and supporting non-government entities (NGEs) in space activities. The GWF Leadership Awards, presented annually since 2007, acknowledge contributions to the global geospatial industry and innovation in addressing global challenges.
- The International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIITB) has developed 'XoRehab,' an IoT-enabled wheelchair device aimed at aiding the rehabilitation of stroke patients post-surgery. The device was developed in Center for Internet of Ethical Things (CIET) at IIITB. The CIET was established in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF) with support from Karnataka Innovation & Technology Society (KITS) and sponsored by IT-BT Department of Government of Karnataka. It incorporates Surface Electromyography to monitor muscle behavior and assist in muscle recovery analysis
- The proposed INDIA'S DIGITAL COMPETITION BILL, 2024 by India's Ministry of Corporate Affairs aims to regulate digital markets through predictive regulation, outlining criteria for Systematically Significant Digital Enterprises (SSDEs), Associate Digital Enterprises (ADEs), and addressing industry concerns about compliance burden and impact on innovation and user experience. The draft bill faces criticism regarding its impact on big tech companies, platform changes, app stores, definition of significant platforms, and potential consequences for start-ups and data sharing.
- Armoured sailfin catfish, an invasive species, has proliferated in Eastern Ghats' water bodies, posing threats to fishing nets, fishermen's safety, and the delicate ecosystem. Named Rakashior devil fish, scientifically called Pterygoplichthys, it was introduced for ornamental fish trade but lacks commercial value, with sharp spines and voracious appetite for native fish species.
- The Tamilnadu State highways department is using soil nailing and hydroseeding techniques to stabilize slopes along major roads in the Nilgiris at five locations: Ketti, Kattabettu, Perar, Kudah, and Udhagamandalam. This project aims to prevent landslips from blocking these crucial roads, employing alternative stabilization methods in areas prone to landslips. Soil nailing strengthens soil by inserting reinforcing elements, while hydroseeding applies a mixture to promote grass and plant growth, preventing erosion. Five grass species, including native Indian ones, are used, with ongoing maintenance by the highways department. The initiative not only protects infrastructure but also offers an environmentally friendly solution.

- The Igl-S air defence system, developed by Russia and known as SA-24 Grinch, is a versatile MANPADS capable of targeting low-flying aircraft, cruise missiles, and drones. It features a 6 km effective range, a 3.5 km altitude limit for target destruction, a powerful 2.5 kg HE-FRAG warhead, and infrared homing guidance.
- Hulikal of Hosanagar taluk, Shivamogga, said to be the wettest place in the state, are facing water crisis as more than 50% of the open wells have dried up
- Tirupati's centuries-old Thathayagunta Gangamma temple saw a large turnout for the annual Ganga Jatara folk festival, despite its postponement due to elections. Starting on May 14 instead of May 7, the nine-day festival, aimed at appeasing the village deity, features devotees in vibrant costumes and colorful processions. TTD Trust Board Chairman Bhumana Karunakar Reddy, along with family members and MP M. Gurumoorthy, participated by offering traditional gifts to the goddess, revered as Lord Venkateswara's younger sister, symbolizing community devotion and cultural heritage.
- Juventus won the Italian Cup after defeating Atalanta 1-0 to deny its opponent a first trophy in six decades.
- Russian President has bolstered the country's military capabilities by ordering the addition of a new nuclear-capable missile known as the Bulava into the Russian military arsenal.
- A team of naturalists recently documented a new spider species named 'Ligdus Garvale' from Garvale, a village nestled in the Somwarpet taluk of the Kodagu district, Karnataka.
- Recently, archeologists have found evidence of a lost landscape known as Sahul in the ancient days that helped humans travel across continents. It can be termed as a supercontinent which was stood exposed on the Earth's surface when humans were in the middle of what can be termed as the last ice age. Since the ice age led to glaciation of water levels on the planet, it ended up exposing parts of land like Sahul which connected to currently known Australia to Papua New Guinea in the north and Tasmania in the south,
- The Horticulture Department is establishing a herbarium at Lalbagh Botanical Garden in Bangalore, India. This herbarium will document every plant species in Lalbagh, making the data digitally accessible within a year. The project includes scientific documentation of dried plant parts, mounted on herbarium sheets with taxonomic information. It will serve as an educational resource and aid in record-keeping of species and determining the age of trees. Additionally, the department plans to publish a series of books on Lalbagh's plant wealth.
- The Supreme Court has ruled that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) cannot arrest individuals under Section 19 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after a special court has taken cognisance of a complaint. If the ED requires custody of an accused appearing in court after a summons, it must seek court approval. An accused appearing on summons is not considered in custody and does not need to apply for bail. The ED must follow specific procedures for further investigations and arrests. The court provided guidelines on issuing summons and warrants and clarified the conditions for bail.
- The Supreme Court has emphasized the protection of private property, mandating that any state acquisition must follow due procedures and ensure fair compensation. The right to private property is constitutionally and humanly protected, requiring proper procedures before deprivation. Despite the 44th Constitutional Amendment, Article 300A necessitates authority of law for property deprivation. The SC outlined seven procedural rights: notice, hearing, reasoned decision, public purpose, fair compensation, efficient process, and conclusion.
- The Global Report on Internal Displacement 2024 (GRID-2024) by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) reveals that the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) increased to 75.9 million in 2023, up from 71.1 million in 2022. Conflict and violence displaced 68.3 million people, with significant numbers in countries like Sudan and Syria. Disaster-induced displacement affected 7.7 million, with a notable decline in weather-related events due to the transition from La Niña to El Niño. Despite the decline, disasters still caused 56% of displacements. The report

emphasizes the need for improved monitoring, climate resilience, and conflict resolution to mitigate displacement impacts.

- China's latest scientific milestone, the High Energy Photon Source (HEPS), set to be the first fourth-generation synchrotron light source in Asia, will begin operations by the end of this year
- 12th India-Mongolia Joint Working Group meeting to bolster bilateral defence ties held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
- Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) has instructed Escoms and KPCL to prepare a 10-year demand report for reliable power supply, addressing gaps in technical frameworks and following a strict four-step approach, with annual submission deadlines and adherence to national policies.
- The Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER) initiated Swachhata Pakhwada under the Swachh Bharat Mission, focusing on sanitation issues, engaging various ministries, and implementing activities to promote healthy sanitation practices across rural and urban areas.
- A recent study by researchers at the University of Copenhagen revealed the disappearance of nearly 6 million trees from Indian farmlands between 2019 and 2022. The study utilized satellite imagery analysis, focusing on large trees with a significant crown size, and highlighted regional hotspots of tree loss, particularly in central India. Possible causes include the conversion of farmland to paddy fields. This study contrasts with reports from the Forest Survey of India (FSI), which focus on overall tree cover increase but may overlook individual tree losses in agricultural areas
- Manchester City won a historic fourth consecutive English Premier League
- India's Chirag Shetty (right) and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy win Thailand Open trophy
- The Indian Army has started receiving the Russian AK-203 assault rifles after the deal with Russia saw back-to-back delays, partly due to the war in Ukraine
- An international team of astronomers recently detected a new, Earth-sized planet named SPECULOOS-3b, just 55 light years away, orbiting an ultra-cool red dwarf star
- Recently, the government released a circular warning its employees of a sophisticated cybercrime— vishing. Vishing is short form of voice+phishing, is carried out through a call on a mobile phone or landline. It's a technique wherein a threat actor calls the victim over the phone and tries to trick him/her into clicking on malicious files or emails, which can then take one to a legitimate-looking website asking to share personal information
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has responded to tight liquidity conditions in the banking system by announcing a significant reduction in the government's treasury bill sales and introducing a new selection of bonds for the Centre's buyback operations. Bond Buyback is a process whereby the central government and state governments buy back their existing securities, by redeeming them prematurely, from the holders. Bond buybacks is a liability management tools widely used in government securities markets to manage refinancing and liquidity risks
- The Materiovigilance Programme of India (MvPI) is a platform launched in 2015 to monitor the safety of medical devices in India. It aims to collect and analyze data on adverse events related to medical devices, including electronic equipment, implants, consumables, surgical instruments, and in-vitro diagnostic reagents. It is operated by the National Coordination Centre (NCC) under the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC) and regulated by the Central Drugs Standards Control Organization (CDSCO) under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. India's regulatory framework for medical devices falls under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940, and Medical Device Rule, 2017, with a significant reliance on imported devices
- FSSAI prohibits calcium carbide in fruit ripening due to health risks from acetylene gas containing arsenic and phosphorus, recommending ethylene gas as a safer alternative. The regulation advises strict compliance, outlines health impacts, and highlights the dangers to consumers and handlers. It also urges reporting unauthorized use and provides guidance on safe fruit ripening practices.

- Venezuela has lost its glaciers due to global warming and human activities, impacting freshwater sources, aquatic ecosystems, and cultural aspects. This loss reflects a broader concern globally, with other regions like India and the Hindu Kush Himalayas facing similar challenges.
- Blue Origin's NS25 completed its 25th flight, marking its seventh human spaceflight. The mission launched from Launch Site One in West Texas, flying 31 humans above the Karman line. New Shepard is a fully reusable sub-orbital launch vehicle, reusing nearly 99% of its dry mass, and uses environmentally friendly liquid oxygen and hydrogen for propulsion. The flight also carried postcards for Blue Origin's educational initiative, aimed at inspiring students in STEAM fields. The crew included Gopi Thotakura, the first Indian space tourist, and Ed Dwight, the first Black astronaut candidate selected by President Kennedy.
- A recent development in international trade involves India's initiation of discussions on the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) during a visit to the UAE. This corridor, conceived in February 2023, aims to establish a major trade route connecting Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, with proposed ports and routes spanning India, the Middle East, and Europe. However, challenges such as construction requirements, technical standardization, handling costs, and diplomatic concerns pose significant hurdles to its realization. Additionally, strategic implications include competition with China's Belt and Road Initiative and diplomatic relations among participating countries
- Australian Federal Budget's recent document introduced the Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) for Indian Nationals, effective from NOV 1 2024. This scheme is a part of the Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA) between Australia and India, promoting legal migration while addressing illegal migration concerns. MATES allows Indian university graduates and young professionals to work in Australia for up to two years without employer sponsorship, provided they meet eligibility criteria like age, English proficiency, recent graduation, and qualifications in specific fields
- Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian were confirmed dead on Monday after search and rescue teams found their crashed helicopter in a fog-shrouded mountain region, sparking mourning in the Islamic Republic
- Researchers at IISc developed a flood forecasting model for Bengaluru to mitigate monsoon flooding. The model includes a Digital Twin, Hydrologic Models, and a Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) Model. It combines data from BBMP and BDA to assess flood probability at the ward level. The model aids in understanding on-ground situations post-rainfall and explores future scenarios. Challenges include encroachments, blocked drains, and solid waste dumping affecting lake interconnectedness. Collaboration with KSNDMC for regular rainfall and flood forecasts is underway. AquaMap proposal submitted through IIT Madras to BBMP for further flood management. The model aims to improve Bengaluru's resilience against monsoon flooding.
- ATCM 46 in Kochi demonstrates India's commitment to Antarctic cooperation and environmental responsibility. The treaty, signed in 1959, has 56 Parties with India as a Consultative Party since 1983. The agenda includes sustainable management, research collaboration, and tourism regulations amid the Ukraine-Russia conflict and concerns about Russia's surveys in Antarctica
- The Supreme Court ruled against mining within a one-kilometer radius of a critical tiger habitat near Sariska Tiger Reserve, directing the Rajasthan government to enforce this prohibition. This decision is part of the TN Godavarman case and addresses violations of previous orders. The Rajasthan government clarified that the mining ban applies to eco-sensitive zones but not tiger reserves.
- The Supreme Court ruled that mining near Sariska Tiger Reserve violated its previous orders, directing the Rajasthan government to stop mining activities within a one-kilometer radius. This case is part of a long-standing legal battle dating back to 1995. The Rajasthan government clarified

the scope of the mining prohibition, noting it applies to eco-sensitive zones but not specifically to tiger reserves.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) updated its Bacterial Pathogens Priority List (BPPL), categorizing antibiotic-resistant bacteria into Critical, High, and Medium Priority groups. Critical Priority pathogens pose major global threats due to high burden, resistance to last resort antibiotics, and the potential to spread resistance. High Priority pathogens have a significant burden in low- and middle-income countries and present challenges in healthcare settings. Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) occurs when pathogens no longer respond to medicines due to misuse and overuse, leading to increased sickness and higher disease spread risk. Other High Priority pathogens include those with persistent infections and resistance to multiple antibiotics.
- Google announced Project Astra at Google I/O, a real-time, multimodal AI assistant aimed to see, understand, and interact with the world in meaningful ways. It's akin to a universal assistant envisioned by Google, capable of constant assistance in everyday life. During the demo, Astra showcased its abilities like identifying objects, answering questions, and assisting with tasks using visual and auditory inputs.
- The RBI issued draft regulations to strengthen project financing for infrastructure, non-infrastructure, and commercial real estate sectors. The framework aims to mitigate financial risks, address delays and cost overruns, and encourage responsible lending. Key revisions include increased provisioning requirements, stricter prudential conditions, clear repayment norms, and mandatory standby credit facilities. Initial observations suggest mixed impacts on profitability and confidence among major banks.
- GalaxEye, a Bengaluru-based startup, successfully tested Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) technology on a High Altitude Pseudo-Satellite (HAPS) developed by the National Aerospace Laboratories. HAPS are stratospheric drones that use solar energy and advanced batteries for prolonged surveillance. SAR technology generates high-resolution, all-weather images for applications like defense, meteorology, and disaster management. GalaxEye's success advances India's technological capabilities, supporting the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative and enhancing defense and environmental monitoring
- Norway, Ireland and Spain announced that they will recognise a Palestinian state
- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Fujitsu Limited are set to bring together researchers with diverse theoretical and systems backgrounds in the field of data science
- Sixteen-year-old Kaamya Karthikeyan from Mumbai became the youngest Indian and the second-youngest girl to summit Mt Everest
- Ademola Lookman scored a stunning hat-trick as Atalanta ended Bayer Leverkusen's 51-match unbeaten run to win the Europa football League final 3-0 and claim their first trophy for 61 years
- The International Cricket Council has launched an all new anthem and music piece, composed by Grammy-award winning composer Lorne Balfe, to be played across ICC world events. The anthem, encapsulating the dynamic spirit of the sport across its different formats, will debut in the opening match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup between USA and Canada in Dallas, Texas
- Fifteen-year-old Preetismita Bhoi became the first weightlifter of India from the country to win a title with a clean and jerk World record and led an unprecedented Indian 1-2 finish in the women's 40kg in the World youth championships in Lima (Peru)
- The recently published report, "Global Land Outlook Thematic Report on Rangelands and Pastoralists" by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification highlighted that rangelands are facing a 'silent demise'. The rangelands are category of Earth's land cover consists mostly of the natural grasslands used by livestock and wild animals to graze and forage. The vegetation of ranges may include tallgrass prairies, steppes (shortgrass prairies), desert shrublands, shrub woodlands, savannas, chaparrals and tundras. Rangelands are the "Wild Open Spaces" that cover about half of the earth's land surface and half of western North America
- The Karnataka Health Department has issued strict measures under the state PCPNDT Act to prevent illegal sex determination, prompted by a recent female foeticide racket. The circular

mandates pregnant women to enter ultrasound rooms alone, prohibits attenders, and directs scanning centres to display no-entry boards. This action aims to enforce the PCPNDT Act, address concerns of gender-based violations, and ensure compliance with legal provisions.

- A report on Bengaluru Urban's lake areas highlights extensive planting of invasive species, leading to increased forest cover (49-57%) but also causing challenges such as invasive species problems, transition to woodlands, and riparian buffer zone issues. Regional analysis shows tree and shrub cover ranging from 35% to 57% in different districts.
- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is now open to new members and observers, enhancing its legal status and diplomatic dialogue capabilities. Established in 1997, BIMSTEC comprises seven member states, focusing on trade, technology, energy, and regional connectivity. Its significance lies in representing a significant portion of the world's population and economy, while also serving strategic and diplomatic interests, particularly for India in countering Chinese influence and promoting regional peace and cooperation.
- India's global ranking in the World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024 has surged to 39th, highest in South Asia, a significant jump from 54th in 2021. Reasons include rich cultural heritage, investments in tourism infrastructure, sustainability efforts, and growing appeal. Strengths lie in price competitiveness, air transport, and infrastructure, but challenges include inflation, supply issues, price competition, and air transport recovery post-COVID-19
- Mysuru filmmaker Chidananda S. Naik won the top prize at the 77th Cannes Film Festival's La Cinef competition for his 15-minute short film "Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know," inspired by a Kannada folktale. The film, shot in four days with limited resources, was chosen from 2,263 entries. Naik, an FTII student and former doctor, received a €15,000 stipend for his victory. Plot: An elderly woman disrupts a village's harmony by stealing their prized rooster, leading to perpetual darkness. Previous Indian Winner: Ashmita Guha Neogi, who won the La Cinef award in 2020 for her short film "CatDog".
- Top gymnast Dipa Karmakar became the first Indian to win a gold medal in the Asian Senior Championships as she clinched the yellow metal in the women's vault event in Tashkent. Dipa secured an average of 13.566 in the vault final on the last day of competitions. Dipa had won a bronze medal in the same event in the 2015 edition
- Three faculty members at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) feature in the first batch of the Indian National Science Academy (INSA) Young Associates. Surendra Kumar Makineni, Assistant Professor at the Department of Materials Engineering; Ved Vivek Datar, Assistant Professor at the Department of Mathematics; and Awadhesh Narayan, Assistant Professor at the Solid State and Structural Chemistry Unit; are among the 20 elected associates. INSA launched the Young Associates and Associate Fellows initiatives this year to recognise the potential of young scientists in the country — 20 in each category — by assessing contributions in any branch of science or technology
- A stone inscription pertaining to the construction of Huligikatte, a check dam across River Tungabhadra, has been found near Hole Mudlapura in the taluk
- Best Year for Indian Filmmakers with 3 Wins at Cannes Festival
 - Payal Kapadia's "All We Imagine As Light":
 - Won the Grand Prix award.
 - First Indian filmmaker to win this award.
 - The film is a Malayalam-Hindi feature about three women on a road trip.
 - Received glowing reviews, compared to works of Satyajit Ray and Wong Kar Wai.
 - Chidananda S Naik's "Sunflowers Were the First Ones to Know":
 - FTII student's film won a major award.
 - Anasuya Sengupta's "The Shameless":
 - Another major award win, adding to India's success.

- Appointments Committee of the Cabinet extended the tenure of the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), General Manoj Pande, by one month
- Granit Xhaka scored as a 10-man Bayer Leverkusen beat Kaiserslautern 1-0 to lift the German Cup in Berlin, winning the club's first double
- India's trade deficit with nine out of the top 10 trading partners, including China, Russia, Singapore, and Korea. Deficit increased with China, Russia, Korea, and Hong Kong but narrowed with the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Indonesia, and Iraq. Specific deficit figures include China (\$85 billion), Russia (\$57.2 billion), Korea (\$14.71 billion), and Hong Kong (\$12.2 billion). China surpassed the U.S. as India's largest trading partner with \$118.4 billion in two-way commerce. India had a trade surplus with the U.S. (\$36.74 billion) and other select partners. Overall, India's total trade deficit decreased compared to the previous fiscal year
- The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has initiated the Shallow Aquifer Management (SAM) model on a pilot basis, aiming to recharge groundwater and tackle urban flooding by drilling shallow borewells, pumping water, and channeling it through recharge pits across various parks in the city.
- The WIPO member states adopted a new treaty focusing on enhancing the patent system's efficacy, preventing erroneous patents related to genetic resources and traditional knowledge, marking a historic breakthrough after a 25-year negotiation process. It includes provisions for indigenous rights, requires disclosure in patent applications, and addresses the use of genetic resources and traditional knowledge in inventions.
- CSIR-CMERI launched an Electric Tiller targeting small to marginal farmers, reducing operational costs and aligning with India's net-zero emissions goals.
- Kempegowda International Airport (India) won the Silver Award in the Airports Council International (ACI) Asia-Pacific & Middle East's recognition for airports handling 15 million to 35 million passengers yearly, focusing on biodiversity preservation and nature-based solutions.
- A Centre for Smart Protein and Sustainable Materials Innovation was launched in Bangalore, a collaboration between IKP Knowledge Park and The Good Food Institute (GFI) India, aiming to support start-ups in this sector with infrastructure, equipment access, legal support, and addressing investment challenges and policy issues for smart protein products.
- Kolkata Knight Riders won the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2024, receiving Rs. 20 crore as the winner's prize.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet extended the tenure of Samir V. Kamat as the Secretary of Department of Defence Research and Development and Chairman of Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO) for one year
- The Indianapolis 500, also formally known as the Indianapolis 500-Mile Race, or simply the Indy 500, is an annual automobile race held at Indianapolis Motor Speedway (IMS) in Speedway, Indiana, United States, an enclave suburb of Indianapolis. Josef Newgarden of Team Penske warded off a late challenge from Mexican Pato O'Ward to win Indianapolis 500 becoming the first back-to-back winner in 22 years
- DD Kisan deploys two AI anchors. The anchors have been named as 'AI Krish' and 'AI Bhoomi', and can speak in 50 Indian and foreign languages.
- The Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India hosted "Pharma Research in AyurGyan And Techno Innovation (PRAGATI-2024)" at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. This interactive meeting focuses on exploring research opportunities and fostering collaboration between CCRAS and the Ayurveda drug industry
- 'Bengaluru Darshini', a hop-on-hop-off bus service by BMTC, launched in 2015, provides day-long tours of Bengaluru's major attractions. Initially attracting 685 passengers in 2021 with a revenue of ₹26.27 lakh, the service saw a tenfold increase in 2022 with over 6,400 passengers and ₹32.97 lakh revenue. By April 2024, it served 2,578 passengers, earning ₹10.42 lakh. Strategies like post-pandemic marketing and multilingual driver-guides have boosted its popularity. While it faces

challenges in reaching more tourists, effective marketing could maximize its potential, making it a key tourist attraction in Bengaluru.

- GAIL commissions its first green hydrogen plant in Madhya Pradesh, producing 4.3 tonnes/day with a 10 MW electrolyzer from Canada, supporting India's National Green Hydrogen Mission for 5MMT production by 2030. Hydrogen initially used at Vijaipur, later for retail; IOCL, Reliance, Adani have similar initiatives. The Mission aims for 5 MMT/yr capacity, Rs. 8L cr investment, 6L jobs, Rs. 1L cr fossil fuel import reduction, and 50 MMT GHG abatement by 2030, emphasizing green hydrogen's clean energy potential.
- The Zero Debris Charter, signed by twelve nations and the ESA, aligns with ESA's Zero Debris approach, aiming for debris neutrality in space by 2030. Signatory countries include Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, showcasing Europe's leadership in space sustainability efforts. The Charter's objectives focus on mitigating and remediating space debris to ensure long-term sustainability, with over 100 organizations worldwide planning to join.
- The Indian Army has partnered with Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) for Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus technology trials, emphasizing a commitment to sustainable transport solutions. This collaboration underscores the Army's efforts to adopt green technology
- 'Made of Chennai', a brand campaign by The Hindu, won in the 'Best in Audience Engagement' category at the WAN-IFRA 2024 Digital Media Awards Worldwide in Denmark. The campaign is an amazing project connecting people and the city via comprehensive touch points across various media. A testament of how powerful a media platform could be when it's used in a very creative way
- The strongest earthquake to hit Italy's Campi Flegrei supervolcano region in decades struck recently
- The Zimbabwe Gold (ZiG) is a new gold-backed currency launched by Zimbabwe. The ZiG, now the sixth currency used by Zimbabwe, has been in circulation since April 5, 2024
- Indian-American astronomer Shrinivas Kulkarni won the 2024 Shaw Prize for Astronomy, highlighting his contributions to understanding astronomical transients' physics. The Shaw Prize Foundation, established in 2002, recognizes achievements in Astronomy, Life Science and Medicine, and Mathematical Sciences, with a substantial monetary award. The prize emphasizes inclusivity and honors recent significant advances or outstanding contributions, promoting research excellence across diverse domains. Astronomical transients are celestial objects displaying rapid brightness changes due to violent phenomena, studied to unveil their origins and insights into broader astronomical phenomena.
- Professor Urbasi Sinha from Raman Research Institute (RRI) is part of the Royal Academy of Engineering's Distinguished International Associates (DIA) programme, focusing on 'Technologies for the Future.' The programme, running from May 2024 to May 2025, includes global collaboration with Professor Adrian Kent from the University of Cambridge and funding of up to £10,000 for collaborative research between RRI and Cambridge
- REC wins 'Sustainability Champion – Editor's Choice Award' at Outlook Planet Sustainability Summit & Awards 2024
- Power Finance Corporation Ltd. (PFC) has been honoured with the Corporate Social Responsibility award in the NF (Non-Fossil Fuel) business category at the Outlook Planet Sustainability Summit & Awards 2024, held in Goa
- The Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTc) scrapped 550 old buses under the National Vehicle Scrappage Policy, which mandates deregistration and scrapping of government vehicles over 15 years old. These buses, older than 15 years or having traveled more than 900,000 kilometers, were sold through a tender process. The policy, effective from April 1, 2022, includes mandatory fitness tests for vehicles and offers incentives like road tax rebates and registration fee waivers for new vehicle purchases. It aims to reduce pollution, enhance safety, support the auto sector, create jobs, and boost the steel industry.

- S&P has upgraded India's outlook to 'Positive' from 'Stable' while reaffirming its long-term sovereign rating at 'BBB-'. This decision is driven by India's robust economic growth, sound economic fundamentals, and effective policy reforms. Key strengths include a dynamic economy and strong external balance sheet, while weaknesses involve high debt and low GDP per capita. This is the first outlook improvement for India by S&P in nearly ten years, reflecting a remarkable economic recovery post-Covid-19. S&P's ratings influence borrowing costs and investor sentiments globally
- The RBI Governor recently launched three initiatives: the Pravaah portal, Retail Direct Mobile App, and FinTech Repository, aiming to boost efficiency in financial services. Pravaah is a web platform for regulatory processes, offering online submission, status tracking, and timely decisions for authorizations and approvals. The Retail Direct App aids retail investors in managing Gilt accounts, facilitating participation in auctions and secondary market trades via smartphones. The FinTech Repository compiles vital data on FinTech firms, aiding policymakers and industry members, while the EmTech Repository focuses on technology adoption by RBI-regulated entities, managed by RBIH.
- India's successful test-firing of the RudraM-II missile highlights its indigenous technological strength and bolsters national defense capabilities. The missile, designed for air-to-surface anti-radiation purposes, boasts impressive specifications like a 300-kilometer range, speeds up to Mach 5.5, and a 200-kilogram payload. It operates from the Sukhoi Su-30 MK-I and features advanced guidance systems, sensors for target acquisition, and incorporates cutting-edge indigenous technologies. This development not only strengthens India's air security but also marks a strategic replacement of older missile systems, showcasing the nation's prowess in defense technology.

