

My Notes....

NATIONAL

SELA TUNNEL DEDICATED TO THE NATION

- The **Sela Tunnel** was “dedicated to the nation” by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.
- It is a **key border infrastructure project** as it connects **Guwahati** to the strategic **Tawang sector** round-the-year, thus aiding **faster military movement** to the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)**.

CAA NOTIFIED

- **More than four years** after Parliament passed **The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019**, the **Ministry of Home Affairs** notified **the Rules to implement the law**.
- In **December 2019**, Parliament passed an **amendment to The Citizenship Act, 1955**, to include a **provision for grant of citizenship to migrants** belonging to the **Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, or Christian** communities who entered **India before December 31, 2014** from **Pakistan, Afghanistan, or Bangladesh**.

CENTRE SIGNS PACT WITH TRIPURA GOVT

- The **Centre** signed a **tripartite agreement** with the **Tripura government** and the **state’s main opposition party**, the **TIPRA Motha**.
- The pact signed for a **time-bound “honorable resolution”** of the long-pending demands of the **state’s tribal population**, including **economic, political, land, linguistic and cultural rights**.

A NEW REPORT CARD

- The **National Council for Educational and Research Training (NCERT)** introduced a new ‘**holistic progress card**’ (**HPC**).
- **HPC** will measure, **apart from academic performance**, a **child’s progress in interpersonal relationships, self-reflection, creativity, and emotional application** in classrooms.
- The HPCs have been devised by **Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH)**, a standard-setting body under the NCERT, for the **foundational stage (Classes 1 and 2)**, **preparatory stage (Classes 3 to 5)** and **middle stage (Classes 6 to 8)**, as per suggestions by the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**.

SHANAN HYDROPOWER PROJECT

- The Centre ordered that **status quo be maintained** on the **Shanan hydropower project**, over which **Punjab and Himachal Pradesh** have made competing claims.
- The **British-era 110-MW hydel project**, situated at **Jogindernagar in Mandi district**, was **leased to Punjab in 1925**.
- The **lease agreement** was signed between the then **ruler of Mandi, Raja Joginder Bahadur**, and **Col BC Batty**, a British representative and Chief Engineer of Punjab. The **99-year-old lease came to an end** on 2 March 2024.

INDIA’S FIRST INDIGENOUS FAST BREEDER REACTOR

- The **vital second stage** of **India’s three-stage nuclear programme** got a boost with the commencement of ‘**core loading**’ at the **country’s first indigenous Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR)** at **Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu**.
- **Core loading** is the **process of placing nuclear fuel assemblies inside the core** of a **nuclear reactor**.

INTERNATIONAL

INDIA-BUILT AIRSTRIP INAUGURATED IN AGALEGA

- Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Pravin Jugnauth jointly inaugurated an airstrip and the St James Jetty on North Agalega Island in the Indian Ocean.
- Agalega — a group of two islands with a total area of 26 sq km and a native population of about 300 people — lies approximately 650 nautical miles (1,050 km) north of Mauritius, and belongs to the island nation.
- The development of the Agalega Islands is in the socio-economic and national security interest of Mauritius, and also aligns with India's maritime vision.

INDIA'S NEW NAVAL BASE IN LAKSHADWEEP

- Naval Detachment Minicoy commissioned as INS Jatayu, an upgraded naval base at the strategic Lakshadweep Islands.
- Lakshadweep, 'a hundred thousand islands' in Sanskrit and Malayalam, is an archipelago of 36 islands located between 220 km and 440 km from Kochi.
- The islands, only 11 of which are inhabited, have a total area of only 32sq km.

ECONOMY

FAIR AND REMUNERATIVE PRICE FOR SUGARCANE (FRP)

- The Centre announced a hike in the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of sugarcane to Rs 340 per quintal for Sugar Season 2024-25 (October-September) from the existing Rs 315 per quintal.
- FRP is the price that the Centre's Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) decides.
- The FRP is based on the recovery of sugar from the cane. Sugar recovery is the ratio between sugar produced versus cane crushed, expressed as a percentage.
- The higher the recovery, the higher the FRP, and the higher the sugar produced from the cane.

INDIA SIGNS TRADE AGREEMENT WITH EFTA

- India signed a trade agreement with the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA), an intergovernmental grouping of Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.
- The deal builds in a plan to attract \$100 billion in investment over 15 years and diversify imports away from China.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

MISSION DIVYASTRA SUCCESS

- India announced the successful testing of an Agni missile capable of carrying multiple warheads (MIRV technology) meant to hit multiple targets simultaneously.
- The success of Mission Divyasthra, as the test was named, was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

- **Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology** can **target multiple targets** that can be **hundreds of kilometers** apart with a **single missile**.

FIRST MOON-LANDING BY PRIVATE COMPANY

- **US made spacecraft landed on the Moon** on 23 February 2024, which also marks the **arrival of private space companies** on the **lunar surface**.
- **Odysseus**, a spacecraft built by **Intuitive Machines**, a ten-year-old company based in Houston, used a **Falcon 9 rocket of SpaceX** to take off from Earth.

METHANESAT

- **MethaneSAT** — a **satellite which will track and measure methane emissions** at a **global scale** — was launched aboard a **SpaceX Falcon9 rocket** from California.
- **Methane is an invisible but strong greenhouse gas**, and the **second largest contributor to global warming** after carbon dioxide, **responsible for 30 per cent of global heating** since the Industrial Revolution.

INDIA AI MISSION

- The **Union Cabinet approved** the **India AI Mission** with an **outlay of Rs 10,372 crore** for the next five years.
- Under it, the government **will allocate funds towards subsidising private companies** that are **looking to set up AI computing capacity in the country**, among other things.

FIFTH-GEN FIGHTER JET AMCA

- The **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)** cleared a **Rs 15,000 crore project** to **design and develop** the **Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA)**, India's **fifth-generation fighter multirole fighter jet**.
- The **Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA)** under the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** will be the **nodal agency for executing the programme and designing the aircraft**.
- It will be manufactured by **state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)**.

INDIA DEVELOPED AN ATMOSPHERIC TESTBED

- The **first phase of India's Atmospheric Research Testbed in Central India (ART-CI)** was inaugurated at **Silkheda in Sehore district**, located about **50 km northwest of Bhopal** in Madhya Pradesh.
- The facility aims to **conduct ground-based observations of weather parameters** like **temperature, wind speeds**, etc. and **in-situ (on-site) observations** of the **transient synoptic systems** – like **low-pressure areas** and **depressions** that form in the **Bay of Bengal** – during the **southwest monsoon season** from **June to September**.

MISCELLANEOUS

HYDROGEN-POWERED FERRY

- Prime Minister launched **India's first indigenously developed hydrogen fuel cell ferry**.
- The vessel, manufactured by **Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)**, will be deployed for **service at Varanasi** in Uttar Pradesh.
- **Hydrogen fuel cell vessels** do not use **conventional batteries** as the primary storage house of electrical energy. The **vessels run on hydrogen fuel**, which is **stored in cylinders**.

VENICE BIENNALE

- The **60th edition of the Venice Biennale**, known as “**the Olympics of the art world**”, will open on 20 April 2024.
- The **Venice Biennale** is one of the biggest and **most prestigious art fairs** in the world.

MAN-MADE METHANE LEAK

- Scientists revealed that a **drilling incident**, at an **exploration well** in the **Mangistau region, southwestern Kazakhstan**, led to **one of the worst methane leaks in history**.
- It was possibly the **second biggest man-made methane leak ever**.
- **Methane is a potent greenhouse gas** — it **traps heat in the atmosphere** and **adds to global warming**.
- **Leaks from fossil fuel operations** are the **biggest source of methane emissions**. About **40% of human-caused methane emissions** come from such operations.

PI DAY

- **March 14, or 3/14** as per the American convention, is **celebrated as Pi Day worldwide** as an ode to the **most well-known approximation (3.14)** of the mathematical **constant Pi**.
- **In 2019, UNESCO’s 40th General Conference designated Pi Day** as the **International Day of Mathematics**.
- **Pi**, represents the **ratio of a circle’s circumference (boundary)** to its **diameter (a straight line between two points on the circle’s boundary, passing through its centre)**. Regardless of the **circle’s size**, this **ratio always remains constant**.

SIMA OR SCALABLE INSTRUCTABLE MULTIWORLD AGENT

- **Google DeepMind** revealed its **latest AI gaming agent** called **SIMA or Scalable Instructable Multiworld Agent**, which can follow **natural language instructions to perform tasks** across video game environments.
- **SIMA points to a future of gaming** where AI agents could **play a key role**.