

My Notes...

NATIONAL

'OPERATION INDRAVATI' LAUNCHED

- **India** launched 'Operation Indravati' to evacuate **its citizens** from the **turmoil-stricken Haiti** to the **neighboring Dominican Republic**.
- **Haiti**, situated in the **Caribbean**, has **plunged into chaos with armed gangs** seizing **control of the streets**, resulting in the **virtual disappearance of the government**.

CONSERVATION OF THE GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD

- The **Supreme Court** constituted a **seven-member committee** to find a **balance between conservation measures for the Great Indian Bustard (GIB)** and efforts **to generate renewable energy** in the same regions.
- The **GIB is an avian species**, which was classified as '**Critically Endangered**' by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature in 2011** — there are **currently less than 200 GIBs in India** and they are mainly found in **Rajasthan and Gujarat**.
- The **biggest threat to these birds** is the **overhead power lines** as **frequent collisions** have resulted in the death of many GIBs.

SMALL-SCALE LNG AS FUEL

- The government has an **ambition to turn India into a gas-based economy** by **pushing adoption and use of natural gas across sectors** and **across the country**.
- One such promising solution is **small-scale LNG (SSLNG)**. India's **largest gas utility GAIL (India) Ltd** recently commissioned the **country's first SSLNG unit at its Vijaipur complex in Madhya Pradesh**.

KATCHATHEEVU ISLAND

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** once again **raised the issue** about the **island of Katchatheevu** which was given away to Sri Lanka.
- **Katchatheevu** is a **285-acre uninhabited speck in the Palk Strait**, between **India and Sri Lanka**.
- **In 1974, Indira Gandhi 'ceded' Katchatheevu to Sri Lanka** as a part of the Indo-Sri Lankan Maritime agreement'.

DELIST SOME 'LOST' MONUMENTS

- The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** has decided **to delist 18 "centrally protected monuments"** because it has assessed that **they do not have national importance**.
- **Delisting of a monument** effectively means **it will no longer be conserved, protected, and maintained** by the ASI.
- Under **the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (AMASR Act)**, any kind of **construction-related activity** is not allowed around a protected site.

INTEGRATED FARM DATA DASHBOARD

- **Agriculture Minister Arjun Munda** inaugurated a **Krishi Integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC)** set up at **Krishi Bhavan in New Delhi**, a **big-screen dashboard of all digital innovations** in the sector.
- The **ICCC is a tech-based solution** involving **multiple IT applications and platforms**, which is designed to help in **making informed decisions**.
- The centre is housed in the **Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare**, which is responsible for **legislation, policy formation, and implementation of initiatives** in the **agriculture sector**.

INTERNATIONAL

UNSC RESOLUTION ON GAZA CEASEFIRE

- The **UN Security Council** demanded **an immediate ceasefire between Israel and Hamas**, and the **immediate and unconditional release of all hostages**, after the **United States** abstained from the vote.
- It is **definitely an important signal from the US**, which has been **supportive of the Israeli government** in the UNSC since the **Hamas attack on 7 October 2023**.

PAKISTAN CARRIES OUT STRIKES INSIDE AFGHANISTAN

- Pakistan carried out **"intelligence-based anti-terrorist operations"** inside the **neighbouring country**.
- After this strikes, the Foreign Office statement said **they had targetted terrorists from the Hafiz Gul Bahadur Group**, which, **along with Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)**, was behind **"deaths of hundreds of civilians and law enforcement officials"**.

THE MAJEED BRIGADE

- The **Majeed Brigade** of the **separatist group Baloch Liberation Army (BLA)** has claimed **responsibility for attack** on a **complex outside Pakistan's strategic Gwadar Port**.
- **Balochistan**, in **Pakistan's southwest**, is the **country's largest and most sparsely populated province**.
- It has **oil reserves** and **abundant natural resources**, but the **ethnic Baloch are Pakistan's poorest and most under-represented people**.

THE RUSSIA CONCERT ATTACK

- **The Islamic State Khorasan (ISIS-K)** claimed **responsibility for the Moscow's famous Crocus City Hall attack**, killing **at least 143 people**, and **injuring hundreds more**.
- **Islamic State Khorasan (ISIS-K)**, emerged in **eastern Afghanistan in late 2014**, and is **currently one of the most active ISIS-affiliates**.
- **'Khorasan'** refers to an **ancient caliphate in the region** that today **encompasses parts of Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and Turkmenistan**.

ECONOMY

STATE OF EMPLOYMENT IN INDIA

- The improvement in **labour market indicators** has coincided with **periods of economic distress**, both **before and during the Covid-19 pandemic**, says the **India Employment Report 2024** released by the **Institute for Human Development and International Labour Organisation**.
- The **'employment condition index'** has **improved between 2004-05 and 2021-22**.
- But some states — **Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand**, and **UP** — have remained at the **bottom throughout this period**, while some others — **Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Telangana, Uttarakhand**, and **Gujarat** — have stayed at the top.

THE GENDER PAY GAP

- **World Bank Group report** found that **globally, women earn just 77 cents for every dollar paid to men.**
- This difference has been cited in the past as an example of the "**gender pay gap**" – **women earning less than men on average.**
- According to the ILO, **the gender pay gap** is defined as the **gap between the average wage level of all women and all men** working in the **labour market for a monthly salary**, hourly or daily wage.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

FIRST EVER NUCLEAR ENERGY SUMMIT

- **Brussels** hosted a **first-of-its-kind Nuclear Energy Summit** that was billed as the **most high-profile international meeting on nuclear energy ever**, boasting the attendance of **representatives from 30 countries.**
- The **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**, which organised event, called it a "**landmark**" and a "**turning point**" in the efforts to **expand the use of nuclear energy for generating clean electricity.**
- Nuclear Energy is a **clean source of energy** with a **minimal carbon footprint.** There is **negligible release of emissions** during the **electricity generation process.**

ISRO'S WINGED VEHICLE 'PUSHPAK'

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro)** on 22 March 2024 **successfully conducted** the **RLV LEX-02 landing experiment**, in a significant demonstration of competence in the **Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) technology.**
- The **second in the series of landing experiments** with the vehicle was conducted at the **Aeronautical Test Range (ATR)** in **Chitradurga.**

SOLAR WASTE BY 2030

- **India generated about 100 kilotonnes (kt) of solar waste** in the **financial year (FY) 2022-2023**, according to a new study published by the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).**
- **Solar waste** refers to **the waste generated** during the **manufacturing of solar modules** and **waste from the field (project lifetime).**
- **Manufacturing** involves **two streams of waste**, including **the scrap that's produced** and **the waste generated from PV modules failing.**

INDIA'S INDIGENOUS AI

- Indian multinational ridesharing company, **Ola**, introduced **Krutrim AI**, claiming it as "**India's own AI**".
- **Krutrim AI** is an assistant "**envisioned to be your own personalised assistant**, which can **simplify your personal and professional life** by **getting a variety of tasks done for you**, while keeping the **aesthetic sense and sensibilities of the Indian ethos.**"

MISCELLANEOUS

METAL-RICH INDIAN OCEAN SEABED

- **Indian delegates** have been visiting the **International Seabed Authority (ISA)**, Jamaica to **strengthen efforts to explore two deep sea regions** in the **Indian Ocean** for mining.
- **New Delhi** is exploring **obtaining rights to mine a metal-rich region**, the **Carlsberg Ridge**, located **away from India's western shores**, and a **cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts** in deep seabed region, **Afanasy-Nikitin Seamount (ANS)**, located **away from the eastern shores**, both in the **vast Indian Ocean**.

FLOOD IN KERALA'S COASTAL AREAS

- **Hundreds of houses** have been **flooded in several coastal areas of Kerala** due to **high sea waves**, also known as **swell waves**.
- **Such flooding events** are called **swell surge** or **Kallakkadal** in Malayalam.
- **Kallakkadal** is essentially **coastal flooding** during the **pre-monsoon (April-May)** season by **swell waves on the southwest coast of India**.

NVIDIA'S PROJECT GR00T

- **AI chip leader Nvidia** on 19 March 2024 announced **Project GR00T** or **Generalist Robot 00 Technology**, which promises **to revolutionise the evolution of humanoid robots**.
- The project aims **to empower humanoid robots** with **human-like understanding** and **movement using Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.