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मराठी

मासिक आवृत्ती | मार्च 2024

ज्ञानकोश

मासिक चालू घडामोडी
(महाराष्ट्र राज्य)

MPSC, आणि सरळ सेवा भरतीसाठी
ZP, आदिवासी विभाग, पोलीस भरती आणि इतर स्पर्धा परीक्षांसाठी
उपयुक्त



डिजिटल इंटेलिजन्स प्लॅटफॉर्म

राष्ट्रीय युवा संसद महोत्सव (NYPF)

नागरिकत्व दुरुस्ती कायदा (CAA)

किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड (KCC)

मत्स्यपालन योजना

ऑपरेशन इंद्रावती

नौदलाने INS जटायू, MH-60R हेलिकॉप्टर
स्क्वाड्रन तैनात केले



Maharashtra State News

National Safety Day

- Observed annually on March 4th, National Safety Day in India is a significant event dedicated to promoting safety awareness and preventing accidents.
- It coincides with the foundation day of the National Safety Council (NSC), established in 1966 to address workplace safety concerns.

Significance:

- Raises awareness about safety in workplaces, communities, and homes.
- Encourages adoption of safe practices and adherence to safety protocols.
- Serves as a platform for safety campaigns, rallies, and educational programs.

Theme:

- This year's theme is 'Focus on Safety Leadership for Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) Excellence'.

Did you Know?

- National Safety day was first observed on March 4, 1972, on the foundation day of the council.

MH forest department sets Guinness World Record

- The Maharashtra forest department achieved a remarkable feat by setting a Guinness World Record during the Tadoba Festival 2024.
- They used a staggering 65,724 saplings from 26 different species to form the words "Bharat Mata," which translates to "Mother India" in Hindi.
- This impressive arrangement not only earned them the title for the "largest potted sapling word" but also served as a unique way to promote environmental awareness and patriotism.

International HPV Awareness Day

- International HPV Awareness Day is marked annually on March 4
- It was developed in 2018 by the International Papillomavirus Society (IPVS)
- It aims to raise awareness about the human papillomavirus (HPV), its associated

cancers, and the available preventive measures.

About:

- HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection globally.
- While most people clear the virus naturally, certain HPV strains can lead to several cancers, including cervical, anal, and head and neck cancers.

Govt gives 7.8cr to restore monuments

- The Maharashtra government has allocated Rs 7.8 crore for the restoration of Soneri Mahal, Delhi Gate and Makai Gates.
- The Soneri Mahal has been granted Rs3.93 crore
- Delhi Gate and Makai Gate received funds worth Rs 2.35 crore. And Rs 1.6 crore respectively.
- This is a positive step towards preserving the state's rich historical and cultural heritage.
- The funds will be used to restore monuments across the state, which will help to attract tourists and boost the local economy.

World Wildlife Day

- United Nations World Wildlife Day (WWD) is celebrated every year on March 3.
- It is a global event dedicated to raising awareness about the diverse and magnificent wildlife on our planet.
- It highlights the critical role these animals and plants play in maintaining healthy ecosystems and supporting human well-being.

About:

- On 20 December 2013, at its 68th session, the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution UN 68/205, decided to proclaim 3 March, the international day of the adoption of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) on the planet raise awareness and benefits fauna and flora in 1973, as World Wildlife Day.

Theme:

- This year's theme is, "Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation."

Did you Know?

- The commemoration was proposed by Thailand

Borivali's Historic Mandapeshwar Caves

- Borivali's historic Mandapeshwar Caves, known for their intricate rock-cut carvings, are set to receive a new addition - a 12-Kg silver Shivling.
- The installation of the Shivling is a significant development for the cave temple, which holds cultural and religious significance for the local community.

About:

- The Mandapeshwar Caves were originally built around the 6th century as Buddhist viharas (monasteries)
- These caves were later transformed into a Hindu temple dedicated to Shiva.
- During the 16th century, the Portuguese converted the caves into a Christian chapel, adding a cross that is still visible today.

Government Initiates Farmer-Focused Schemes with Ambitious Goal of Doubling Income

- Maharashtra CM stated that the State government has implemented several schemes to double farmers' income.
- He highlighted the ongoing support for agriculturists during challenges like drought and excess rain.

Key Points:

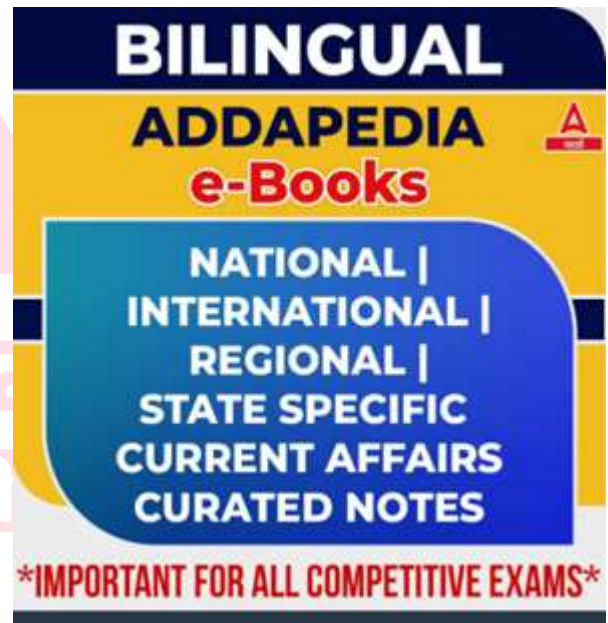
- The Mahayuti government, driven by Balasaheb Thackeray's ideology, has allocated a substantial financial aid of ₹35,000 crore to farmers over the past 17 to 24 months.
- The Maharashtra government introduced crop insurance at an unprecedented cost of only ₹1 for farmers.
- Similarly, govt have implemented various other schemes that are aimed at doubling farmers' income.

MH CM lays foundation of Metro Line-12 in Mumbai metropolitan region

- Maharashtra CM laid the foundation stone for Metro Line-12 that will connect Kalyan to Taloja in Navi Mumbai.

About:

- Metro Line-12 is one of the several Metro lines that are strategically being developed across the Mumbai metropolitan region (MMR) to complement the exceptional transportation services of the Mumbai metro.
- Metro Line-12 acts as an extension of Metro Line-5 from Kalyan, thereby playing a crucial role in enforcing interconnectivity within the intricate and extensive Metro network.
- Metro Line-12 incorporates a completely elevated structure composed of 19 elevated stations and it constitutes a total length of about 22.173 km.
- The estimated cost of this project is around ₹5,865 crores, and it is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2027.



700 proposals for cluster schools under govt review

- The Maharashtra government is currently reviewing around 700 proposals from 1,900 institutions for establishing cluster schools in the state.
- These schools aim to improve educational access and quality, particularly in rural areas.
- Schools with less than 20 enrolments could be merged with nearby schools so that students get good facilities and quality education.

World Obesity Day

- **World Obesity Day, held annually on March 4th, is a unified day of action to raise awareness and encourage solutions to address the global obesity crisis.**

About:

- The inaugural World Obesity Day was held on March 4th, 2015.
- It was established by the **World Obesity Federation**
- It aimed to **bring global attention to the rising issue of obesity** and encourage collaborative efforts to address it.

Theme:

- The World Obesity Day 2024 theme is **“Let's Talk About Obesity and...”**
- This theme emphasizes to encourage people to start conversations that address obesity from a cross-cutting perspective.
- The idea is to look at health, youth, and the world as a whole in order to find ways to combat obesity together.

Mastermind of 26/11 Mumbai Attacks, LeT Terrorist Azam Cheema, Passes Away in Pakistan

- **Azam Cheema, a key conspirator in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, reportedly died of a heart attack in Pakistan on March 2, 2024.**
- He was 70 years old.

Key Points:

- He was also involved in the **2006 Mumbai train bombings that killed 188 people and injured more than 800 people.**
- The **United States** had accused him of training terrorists involved in the 26/11 attacks.

Metro 4 to be operational by Dec 2025'

- **MP Rajan Vichare, said that the Thane to Mumbai Metro 4 route is expected to be operational by December 2025**
- It connects **Kasarvadavli in Thane with Wadala in Mumbai.**
- It's a major milestone in Maharashtra's urban development.

Pune airport new terminal likely to be inaugurated on March 10

- The **new terminal building at Pune Airport will be inaugurated online by PM Modi on March 10th, 2024.**
- This new terminal, which showcases Maharashtra's rich culture, **spans 51,595 square meters and is anticipated to handle 12 million passengers annually, a substantial upgrade from the current capacity of 7.2 million.**
- Also a **pedestrian bridge** has been constructed to reach Aeromall from the airport terminal.

MMRDA Receives Budget Approval for 2024-25, Allocates Rs 41,955 Crore for Infrastructure

- The **Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA)** received budget approval for the 2024-25 fiscal year.
- The **total budget is estimated at Rs 39,453 crore, with Rs 41,955 crore allocated specifically for infrastructure projects.**
- This significant investment aims to improve the **Mumbai Metropolitan Region's infrastructure**, including:
 1. Constructing new Metro lines
 2. Building the Thane-Borivali Twin Tube Tunnel Road
 3. Developing an underground tunnel road
 4. Creating a Versova-Virar Sea Link
 5. Constructing the Thane Coastal Road
 6. Establishing growth centers
 7. Redeveloping the Ramabai Ambedkar Nagar slum

Mumbai to Launch Pod Taxi Service for Smoother Commute to Bandra-Kurla Complex

- **Mumbai is set to introduce a futuristic transportation system - pod taxis**
- These **automated, driverless pods will aim to ease traffic congestion and provide a smoother commute between Bandra and Kurla railway stations, connecting to the Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) business district.**

Key Points:

- **Route: 8.8 kilometers long with 38 stops**

- **Capacity:** Each pod can hold up to 6 passengers
- **Speed:** Up to 40 kilometers per hour
- **Implementation:** Public-private partnership
- This innovative project is expected to revolutionize urban mobility in Mumbai and serve as a model for other cities facing similar traffic challenges.

MH issues GR for suo moto disclosure of information under RTI Act

- The MH govt issued a **Government Resolution (GR)** urging departments to proactively disclose information as mandated by Section 4 of the Right to Information (RTI) Act.
- This move aligns with the recent Supreme Court emphasis on the importance of "suo motu" disclosures, where public authorities share information without waiting for individual RTI applications.
- This initiative by the Maharashtra government is a positive step towards promoting transparency and citizen empowerment through the RTI Act.
- **Implementing Section 4 effectively is seen as crucial for:**
 1. Reducing RTI application backlog
 2. Increasing transparency

BMC initiates final launch of girders to connect Coastal Road with Bandra Worli Sea Link

- The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has begun installing the final section of the bridge connecting the Mumbai Coastal Road Project (MCRP) to the Bandra Worli Sea Link (BWSL).
- The project involves launching girders to bridge the 850-meter gap between the Worli interchange of the MCRP and the BWSL.
- Almost two girders, measuring 44 and 46 meters each, have already been successfully installed.
- This development brings the MCRP closer to completion, aiming to improve traffic flow and connectivity in Mumbai.

Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka have met less than 50% of capex target in FY24

- As of January 2024, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka have reportedly spent less than 50% of their allocated capital

expenditure (capex) budget for the financial year 2023-24 (FY24).

- **Maharashtra: 37.49%**
- **Karnataka: 41%**
- **Gujarat: 46.4%**
- These figures suggest that these states may not be able to fully utilize their planned investments in infrastructure and other development projects during the current fiscal year.

Wildlife board concern over ESZ provision violations by states

- The Wildlife Board has expressed significant concern regarding violations of Essential Standard Zone (ESZ) provisions by several states.
- These provisions, established within the framework of (mention the relevant legislation/regulation), aim to protect critical habitats and ensure the well-being of wildlife populations.
- The issue was raised in the 78th Standing Committee meeting chaired by Union environment minister Bhupender Yadav.
- The Board's concerns stem from reports of (mention specific examples of violations, e.g., development projects exceeding permitted limits, inadequate conservation measures).
- These violations, if left unchecked, could have detrimental consequences for (mention potential consequences, e.g., habitat loss, species endangerment).

Yadava dynasty-era pots found during Satara temple restoration

- Centuries-old clay pots have been unearthed during the restoration and conservation works at Katreshwar's Shivling temple in the Katarkhatav village of Satara's Khatav tehsil.
- The pots could be 800-900 years old.
- The "jirnoddhar" work of the temple has been undertaken by state govt, which has sanctioned Rs 3 crore for the first phase of the work.

About:

- The Yadava dynasty was a Hindu dynasty that ruled parts of western India from the 9th to the 14th centuries.

- The dynasty is known for its patronage of the arts and architecture, and many temples were built during their reign.

International Women's Day

- International Women's Day (IWD) is celebrated annually on March 8th.
- It's a day to recognize the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women.
- It also serves as a call to action for accelerating gender equality.

About:

- The United Nations began celebrating International Women's Day in 1975, which had been proclaimed the International Women's Year.
- In 1977, the United Nations General Assembly invited member states to proclaim March 8 as an official UN holiday for women's rights and world peace.

Theme:

- The United Nations has designated the year 2024's theme as 'Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress'
- It focuses on addressing economic disempowerment
- The campaign theme for this year is 'Inspire Inclusion.'

CIDCO Allocates Rs 4000 Crores for Housing projects in 2024-25 Budget

- Navi Mumbai is set for a significant improvement in housing and infrastructure development as the City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) allocated Rs 4,000 crore for housing projects in its 2024-25 budget.

About:

- Rs 4,018 crore to construct around 90,000 homes under the Prime Minister Awas Yojana to cater to low and middle-income groups.
- Rs 730 crore for water supply projects to address water scarcity.

Key Points:

- The Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) is a flagship initiative by the Indian government to provide affordable housing for all by 2022 (target extended to Dec 2024 for Urban).

It has two main components:

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U):

- This scheme targets urban poor families, including those living in slums. It offers a credit-linked subsidy (CLSS) on home loans to eligible beneficiaries from Economically Weaker Section (EWS) and Low-Income Group (LIG) categories. Additionally, it provides interest rate subsidy for Middle Income Groups (MIG I & II)

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G/R):

- This scheme focuses on providing rural households with pucca houses. It provides financial assistance for building new homes or renovating existing ones.

9,000 MW solar power to provide 12-hr supply to farmers during day time

- Deputy CM issued letters of award to 95 entities for the installation of solar plants to generate 9,000 MW power, creating 25,000 jobs in Maharashtra.

About:

- This initiative aims to provide a reliable 12-hour daytime electricity supply to farmers using a massive 9,000 MW solar power plant.
- It will enable 40 per cent agriculture feeders to be driven by solar power by 2025.
- This project is significant for a couple of reasons:
 - **Scale:**
 - With a capacity of 9,000 MW, this solar plant is a substantial undertaking.
 - **Target beneficiaries:**
 - By dedicating this power specifically to agriculture feeders, it directly addresses the needs of farmers for daytime electricity to run irrigation equipment and other agricultural operation.

Torrent Power wins Rs 1,540 crore bid for 306 MW solar project in Nashik

- Torrent Power has secured a 306 MW solar power project in Nashik, Maharashtra.
- The project valued at Rs 1,540 crore will be set up across 48 locations in the district.
- The company received the Letter of Award (LoA) from Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co Ltd (MSEDCL).

- The project aims to **provide stable daytime electricity to agricultural consumers through decentralized solar power.**
- The power generated will be **sold at a tariff of Rs 3.10 per kWh for 25 years.**
- This project is expected to be **commissioned within 18 months.**

CIDCO Allocates Rs 977 Crores for the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport in 2024-25 Budget

- Navi Mumbai is set for a significant improvement in infrastructure development as the City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) allocated Rs 977 crore for the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport in its 2024-25 budget.
- The aim is to expedite critical projects like the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA), Navi Mumbai Airport Influence Notified Area (NAINA), metro expansion, a coastal road, and a water supply scheme.

About:

- Rs 977 crore allocated to expedite the development of the new airport.
- Infrastructure:
 - Rs 730 crore for water supply projects to address water scarcity.
 - Rs 610 crore for Metro Rail projects for improved connectivity.
 - Rs 569 crore for developing NAINA.
 - Rs 300 crore for Kharghar-Turbhe Link Road.
 - Rs 284 crore for Railway projects.

Sunrays event at the Ellora Caves on Sun

- Every year, citizens eagerly await a **unique celestial phenomenon at the Ellora Caves.**
- On a specific day, the **sun's rays penetrate through the cave entrance and illuminate the face of a Lord Buddha sculpture located inside Cave number 10.**
- This year the phenomenon is most likely to **occur on March 10 and 11**
- This remarkable event is a **popular tourist attraction**
- The Sun Rays are expected to **illuminate Lord Buddha's face between 4:30 pm and 5:15 pm for two days.**

Maharashtra's 4th Women's Policy unveiled

- Maharashtra has launched its fourth **Women's Policy**, outlining a roadmap for women's empowerment
- The policy, the **fourth** after the ones announced in 1994, 2001 and 2014, aims for **comprehensive and all-inclusive development of women with focus on eight areas.**

These are:

1. **Health, nutrition and wellbeing**
2. **Education and skill development**
3. **Ending sexual and gender-based violence**
4. **Gender responsive livelihood enhancement, gender inclusive infrastructure.**
5. **Gender responsive governance and political participation**
6. **Gender sensitive natural resource management,**
7. **Climate change adaptation and disaster management**
8. **Exclusive sports policy.**

Three committees will oversee implementation:

- **High-Power Committee:** Chaired by the Chief Minister for high-level oversight.
- **State Task Force:** Led by the Women and Child Development Minister for strategic guidance.
- **District Committees:** Headed by Guardian Ministers for local-level monitoring.

Electricity Price Hike in Mumbai

- Mumbai residents can expect to see a **significant increase in their electricity bills starting in April.**
- The **Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC)** approved an **average tariff increase of around 24% for Tata Power customers.**
- This hike comes **after a stay on a previous tariff revision** meant to recover costs.
- The **increase will vary depending on electricity usage, with bills going up by 27-44% for residential consumers.**

SWAMIH allocates Rs 160 cr to Stans Buildtech Homes for stalled project

- **Government-backed SWAMIH fund allocates ₹160 crore to Stans Buildtech**

Homes for completion of their stalled Sky Annex project in Chembur, Mumbai.

- This **Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) project faced delays** due to issues with tenants, approvals, and financing.
- With SWAMIH funding, **the project is expected to be completed by the end of 2026.**

State to become \$2 trillion economy by 2035: Dy CM

- MH Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis said that the **state government was planning** to fast track **economic growth to achieve \$2 trillion (around Rs 165 lakh crore) gross domestic product (GDP) by 2035** through various investment and policy measures.

Key Strategies:

Boost Manufacturing:

- Prioritize sectors with high growth potential, like textiles, pharmaceuticals, and information technology. Incentivize domestic manufacturing and attract foreign investment.

Infrastructure Development:

- Invest heavily in infrastructure projects like roads, bridges, and high-speed rail to improve connectivity and facilitate trade.

MSMEs and Startups:

- Foster a supportive environment for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and startups. Provide access to credit, simplify regulations, and promote innovation.

Human Capital Development:

- Invest in education and skill development programs to create a skilled workforce that can meet the demands of the evolving economy

Sustainable Growth:

- Ensure that economic growth is environmentally sustainable. Promote renewable energy sources and adopt green technologies.

Maharashtra has got more FDI than Gujarat, Karnataka or UP

- MH deputy CM said that the **state is the engine of the country's economy.**
- MH has **garnered more Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) than Gujarat, Karnataka or Uttar Pradesh.**
- He was **addressing a 'Viksit Bharat' (developed India) event at Pune's Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.**

About:

- Earlier, **FDI inflow was low** due to policy paralysis.
- However, PM Modi has started taking the country on the path of progress by **emphasizing the 'perform, reform and transform' model.**
- Now, Maharashtra is **the engine of the Indian economy** and the nation cannot make any development without Maharashtra.

10,000-yr-old' rock art carvings found in Maharashtra's Ratnagiri villages

- **Eight geoglyphs**, which an anthropologist said could be around **10,000 years old**, have been **discovered in Ratnagiri district.**
- While **seven of them—of which one is about 17ft long—have been found in Umbarle village in Dapoli taluka, the eighth is in Borkhat village in Mandangad taluka.**

About:

- **Geoglyphs are a form of prehistoric rock art carvings.**
- Clusters of them are spread across **900km of the Konkan coast in Maharashtra and Goa.**
- Ratnagiri district has **more than 1,500 pieces of such art across 70 sites.**
- **Seven of these sites are on Unesco's tentative world heritage list.**

Mumbai Coastal Road inauguration

- The **south-bound corridor of the coastal road between Worli and Marine Drive, also known as Mumbai Coastal Road Project Phase 1, in south Mumbai is set to be opened for traffic on Monday, March 11.**

Mumbai Coastal Road Project Phase 1

- The construction work of the Mumbai Coastal Road had started on October 13, 2018, and its projected cost was ₹12,721 crore.
- Eknath Shinde has said a world-class central park spread over 320 acres will come up **along the 'Dharmaveer Sambhaji Maharaj Coastal Road'.**
- The **10.5-kilometer-long** stretch will be opened for traffic in the first phase. Motorists can enter the coastal road from Worli Seaface, Haji Ali interchange and Amarson's interchange points, and exit at Marine Lines.

Key Points:

Speed Limits:

- Straight road: 80 km/hr
- Tunnel: 60 km/hr
- Entry/exit points & turns: 40 km/hr

Traffic Restrictions:

- Open weekdays (Mon-Fri) only, 6 AM to 8 PM
- No stopping, getting out of vehicles, or taking pictures on the route.

National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

- **March 10** is celebrated as **National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NWGHAAD)**.
- This day highlights the **impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls**, and the importance of prevention, testing, care, and treatment.
- **This day was first observed in 2005.**

Theme:

- The theme for NWGHAAD 2024 is: **“Prevention and Testing at Every Age. Care and Treatment at Every Stage”.**

Maharashtra Makes Mother's Name Mandatory on All Govt Documents

- The Maharashtra cabinet has **decided to make including a mother's name mandatory on all government documents.**
- This rule will take effect from **May 1, 2024.**
- The new requirement applies to a **wide range of documents including birth certificates, school records, property papers, Aadhaar cards, and PAN cards.**
- This move is seen as a **step towards promoting gender equality.**

Dharavi Redevelopment Project Initiates Comprehensive Survey

- The **Dharavi Redevelopment Project** will initiate a **major survey on March 18th.**
- This initiative **aims to gather details on every residence in Dharavi to determine eligibility for the project's rehabilitation program.**
- The survey will **begin in Kamala Raman Nagar** and involve numbering each hut followed by laser mapping of the entire area.
- **Information will be digitally collected** using a mobile app to ensure efficiency and **create a digital archive – the first of its kind for Dharavi.**
- The **State Government will use the survey data to decide resident eligibility for the project's rehabilitation benefits.**

MH govt approves extension of metro rail to Chandni Chowk and Wagholi in Pune

- The **Maharashtra government** has **approved the extension of the Pune metro rail to Chandni Chowk and Wagholi.**
- This expansion **aims to improve traffic congestion** and offer a more eco-friendly commute for residents.
- **Two Branches:**
 - **Vanaz to Chandni Chowk (1.12 km) with 2 stations**
 - **Ramwadi to Wagholi (11.63 km) with 11 stations**
- **Total Length: 12.75 km**, fully elevated
- **Estimated Cost: Rs 3,756.58 crore**
- This project is **expected to significantly benefit Pune's transportation system.**

MH cabinet gives nod to 300-acre park in Mumbai; guesthouse for pilgrims in Ayodhya

- The **Maharashtra cabinet** recently **approved two proposals aimed at public wellbeing.**
- One is the **development of a massive 300-acre park in Mumbai, modeled after New York's Central Park.**
- This could provide much-needed **green space for the city's residents.**
- The **other initiative involves building a guesthouse in Ayodhya, a holy town in Uttar Pradesh, to serve pilgrims from Maharashtra** visiting the recently opened Ram temple there.

Project 'Mukhyamantri Saurya Udyog Utthan Prkalp' announced

- Industries in Maharashtra will **receive rooftop solar projects through a public-private partnership**, as announced by the Government.
- This initiative comes after the **recent launch of a 400 MW solarisation project** for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) by the state's CM and DY CM
- The project, **known as 'Mukhyamatri Saurya Udyog Utthan Prkalp'**, is being implemented by the **Mahatma Phule Renewable Energy and Infrastructure Technology Limited (MAHAPREIT).**
- CM has **emphasized the importance of solar rooftop projects for industries** in the state as a way to cut down on power expenses.

- The initiative is **expected to bring significant benefits to industries in Maharashtra by reducing their reliance** on traditional grid-supplied power and lowering their overall electricity costs.

Soumya Swaminathan receives Yashwantrao Chavan National Award

- **Dr. Soumya Swaminathan** was recently honored with the **Yashwantrao Chavan National Award**.
- This prestigious award **recognizes individuals who significantly contribute to India's national integration, constitutional values,** and social and economic development.
- Swaminathan's **extensive work in HIV and tuberculosis research,** along with her **leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic,** made her a deserving recipient of this award.
- The award ceremony was held in Mumbai.

Did you know?

- She is a **renowned pediatrician** and was a **former Chief Scientist of the World Health Organization**.

Maharashtra govt to avail Rs 15,000 crore loan from NABARD

- The Maharashtra government plans to **borrow Rs 15,000 crore from NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development)** to expedite irrigation projects in the state.
- This loan will be used to **complete 75 irrigation projects and construct canals and distributaries for an additional 155 projects.**

About:

- The project **aims to improve irrigation capacity and benefit farmers by bringing more land under irrigation.**
- The loan will be **availed in phases, with Rs 7,500 crore sanctioned in the first phase for completing 37 irrigation projects.**
- This initiative is **expected to create additional irrigation potential for around 28.7 lakh hectares of land.**

Ashram schools to have mandatory sickle cell test

- Union minister of state for **tribal affairs Dr Bharati Pawar** said that soon **sickle cell tests**

will be made compulsory in the ashram schools across the Nasik district.

- It comes in view that **Sickle cell anemia is mostly found among tribals** and, therefore, the **tests are being carried out for free in the district hospital.**

About:

- **Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd (Trifed),** under the ministry of tribal affairs.

Sickle Cell Disease (SCD)

- **Inherited blood disorder affecting red blood cells.**
- **Abnormal hemoglobin causes red blood cells to become stiff and sickle-shaped.**
- Sickle cells block **blood flow, leading to pain, fatigue, and organ damage.**
- **Treatments aim to manage symptoms and prevent complications.**
- **Bone marrow transplant is the only cure for SCD as of now.**

National Good Samaritan Day

- **National Good Samaritan Day is celebrated on March 13th** each year.
- It's a day to **recognize people who help others in need, without expecting anything in return.**
- The day is named after the **parable of the Good Samaritan in the Bible,** which tells the story of a traveler who helps a wounded stranger.
- The day was first recognized by the United States White House in 1996 in honour of the **life of sports journalist and humanitarian Chad Powellin.**

Key points:

- **Promotes kindness and charity:** It encourages people to be more helpful and compassionate towards others.
- **Honors selfless acts:** Recognizes those who go out of their way to assist strangers.
- **Importance of community:** Highlights the value of helping one another and building a stronger community.

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All schools told to register for 25% RTE quota admissions

- The Maharashtra School Education and Support Department has mandated that all schools in the state register for the 25% Right To Education (RTE) quota admissions.
- This initiative ensures free education for eligible students from disadvantaged backgrounds in private schools, from entry level up to grade eight.

80 villages, towns in MH named after Muslim kings; 32 after Aurangzeb

- Around 80 villages and towns in Maharashtra bear the names of Muslim rulers who governed parts of the state.
- These rulers include Mughals, Adilshahis, and Nizamshahis. Interestingly, Aurangzeb, often seen as a controversial figure, has the most named places (32) after him, followed by Jahangir (21).

About:

- These names reflect the long and complex history of MH. where Muslim rule left a lasting imprint.
- The naming styles are often combinations, with some places named directly after rulers (Aurangabad) and others incorporating the ruler's name with a descriptive term (Shahjahanpur Chakla).

"Now": The energy chatbot to assist MSEDCL consumers

- MSEDCL has introduced an innovative chatbot service named "Now" to empower its consumers with a user-friendly and interactive platform for managing their electricity accounts.
- This chatbot leverages artificial intelligence to provide real-time support and address consumer queries efficiently.

Key functionalities of Now:

- 24/7 Accessibility
- Multilingual Support
- Simplified Bill Management
- Prompt Outage Reporting
- Informative Q&A Support

World Consumer Rights Day

- World Consumer Rights Day is an annual event held on March 15th.
- It's a day to raise awareness about consumer rights and empower consumers around the world.

Theme 2024:

- This year's theme is "Fair and Responsible AI for Consumers".
- It focuses on the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on consumers and the need for ethical and transparent practices.

History:

- Inspired by a 1962 speech by President John F. Kennedy on consumer rights, the consumer movement began marking World Consumer Rights Day in 1983.

Significance:

- The day promotes informed consumer choices, fights against unfair business practices, and educates consumers about their rights.

World Kidney Day 2024

- Observed on the second Thursday of March annually i.e., on March 14th 2024.

Objective:

- Aimed at educating individuals about reducing the incidence and impact of kidney diseases.
- Healthcare professionals and nephrologists play a pivotal role in spreading awareness.

History:

- Originated from a collaboration between the International Society of Nephrology and the International Federation of Kidney Foundation.

- First observed in 2006 with the theme **'Are your kidneys okay?'**

Theme of World Kidney Day 2024:

- **'Kidney Health for All - Advancing Equitable Access to Care and Optimal Medication Practice.'**
- Chosen in a meeting of the World Kidney Day Steering Committee in September 2023.

Transgender cell made mandatory in colleges, to ensure inclusivity, prevent bias

- The **Maharashtra government's 2024 guidelines** mandate the creation of **transgender cells in all colleges.**
- This aims to foster a more inclusive learning environment and prevent discrimination against transgender students.
- **University-level cells will provide a comprehensive approach,** with dedicated coordinators offering counselling, career guidance, and academic support.
- **College-level cells will act as watchdogs,** ensuring a prejudice-free atmosphere and addressing issues like mental harassment.

Country's first LNG buses roll in Mumbai

- The **Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC)** is introducing **Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) buses in Mumbai.**

This initiative aims to achieve a two-fold benefit:

1. **Reduced Carbon Emissions:**
 - LNG burns cleaner than diesel, leading to a projected 10% decrease in CO2 emissions.
 - This helps combat air pollution and contributes to a greener Mumbai.
2. **Cost Savings:**
 - MSRTC expects significant fuel cost savings by switching to LNG.
 - They project an annual saving of Rs 235 crore by converting their fleet of 5,000 buses from diesel to LNG.

Air India building transferred to Maharashtra Govt.

- The **Indian government transferred ownership of the iconic Air India building in Mumbai to the Maharashtra state government.**

- The deal involved a **payment of ₹1,601 crore by Maharashtra and waived dues of ₹298.42 crore owed by Air India Assets Holding Company Ltd (AIAHL).**
- This decision marks the **culmination of a long process and benefits both parties.**
- Maharashtra acquires a prime property near the state secretariat, while the central government clears dues and sheds a non-core asset.

About:

- Air India's roots trace back to **1932**, when it was **founded as Tata Airlines by JRD Tata**, making it
- It began with a **single-engine aircraft carrying airmail.**
- After **World War II**, it became a public company and was renamed **Air India.**

World Sleep Day

- **World Sleep Day is observed on the Friday before the March equinox** (This year it is 15th March)
- It is a global event raising awareness about the importance of sleep.

Key Points:

- It is organized by the **World Sleep Day Committee of the World Sleep Society, formerly World Association of Sleep Medicine (WASM)**
- The **first World Sleep Day** was held on 14 March **2008.**

Theme:

- The theme for this World Sleep Day is **"Sleep Equity for Global Health"**
- The day promotes the benefits of **adequate sleep and the negative consequences of sleep disorders.**
- It aims to educate people about **sleep medicine, prevention, and management of sleep problems.**

About:

- The **March equinox or northward equinox is the equinox on the Earth when the subsolar point appears to leave the Southern Hemisphere and cross the celestial equator, heading northward as seen from Earth.**
- The **March equinox is known as the vernal equinox (spring equinox) in the Northern Hemisphere and as the autumnal equinox (autumn equinox) or fall equinox in the Southern Hemisphere.**

National Vaccination Day

- On 16 March 1995, the **government of India started the pulse polio Immunization Programme** as the **first attempt of eradicating the disease from the country.**
- Since then, **March 16 has been celebrated as National Vaccination Day.**

About:

- National Vaccination Day** aims to **raise awareness about the importance of vaccines.**
- It recognizes the **life-saving benefits of vaccination in preventing serious diseases.**
- This day **encourages people to get vaccinated and stay up-to-date on their immunizations.**

Key Points:

- The **vaccination campaign, "Do Boond Zindagi Ki,"** has **targeted children between the ages of 0 and 5, and two drops of the vaccine orally are administered at public health centers.**

Theme:

- The **theme for National Vaccination Day 2024 is "Vaccines Work For All"**

Maharashtra cabinet approves renaming of Ahmednagar to Ahilyanagar

- The **Maharashtra cabinet** has approved the **renaming of Ahmednagar city and district to Ahilyanagar.**
- This decision **honors Ahilyabai Holkar, a revered 18th-century Maratha queen** known for her strong leadership and progressive policies.
- This **renaming reflects a trend in the state towards reevaluating cultural ties and celebrating historical figures.**
- The **move aligns with previous initiatives to rename cities and landmarks.**

Maharashtra Cabinet Approves Renaming Of 8 Mumbai Railway Stations

- The **Maharashtra cabinet** decided to **rename eight railway stations in Mumbai that have names from the British colonial era.**
- This **aims to reflect Indian history and culture.**
- These Railway stations include:**
 - Currey Road becomes Lalbaug
 - Sandhurst Road becomes Dongri
 - Marine Lines becomes Mumbadevi

- Charni Road becomes Girgaon
- Cotton Green becomes Kalachowki
- Dockyard Road becomes Mazgaon
- King Circle becomes Tirthakar Parshivnath
- Mumbai Central Station to Nana Jagannath Shankarsheth Station,

Note:

Changing name of Mumbai Central Station to Nana Jagannath Shankarsheth Station, **requires approval from the Railways Ministry.**

Maharashtra to borrow over Rs 17,000 crore

- The **Maharashtra state cabinet** has **approved borrowing Rs 17,000 crore to strengthen the network of agricultural solar pumps across the state.**
- This **initiative aims to improve irrigation and reduce dependence on grid-supplied electricity for farmers.**
- Funds will come from two institutions:**
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) - Rs 8,109 crore**
- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) - Rs 9,020 crore**
- The **project aims to:**
 - Distribute solar powered agricultural pumps
 - Solarize agricultural power lines

Airports Council International Names Mumbai Airport Best in Asia Pacific Region

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) in Mumbai** has been **recognized as the best airport in the Asia-Pacific region for handling over 40 million passengers annually.**
- This **prestigious title, awarded by the Airports Council International (ACI), marks CSMIA's seventh consecutive year receiving this recognition.**
- Passenger feedback through the ACI's Airport Service Quality (ASQ) program** determines the winner.
- This **award highlights CSMIA's commitment to providing exceptional customer experiences and its dedication to continuous improvement.**
- Catalysis:** Exhibit remarkable catalytic activity in various chemical transformations.
- Electronics:** Used in nanoelectronic devices, conductive inks, and sensors.

- **Environmental Remediation:** Employed in detecting and removing pollutants from water and soil.

Nyepi day

- Nyepi Day is also known as **Bali's Day of Silence**.
- It marks the **Hindu New Year according to the Balinese calendar**.
- The majority of Bali's population follows Hinduism.

Significance

- Nyepi Day is a holy day aimed at purifying the island from the previous year's negativity.
- It sets the tone for a positive and prosperous new year.

Observance

- Nyepi is observed with **silence, fasting, and meditation**.
- All lights and sounds are turned off, and all activities cease.
- The day is spent in silence, self-reflection, and meditation.
- Traffic comes to a halt, and the island appears deserted.

Ordnance Factories Day

- **Ordnance Factories Day** is celebrated on **March 18th every year in India**.
- It commemorates the **establishment of the first Ordnance Factory in Cossipore, Kolkata, in 1801**.

About:

- The day highlights the **contributions of the Ordnance Factories Board (OFB) to India's self-reliance in defense equipment**.
- The OFB is a crucial organization **under the Ministry of Defence**.
- It is responsible for manufacturing a **wide range of weaponry and ammunition for the Indian Armed Forces**.
- Often referred to as the "Fourth Arm of Defence", the OFB plays a vital role in national security.

Theme:

- Ordnance Factories Day 2024 theme is **"Operational Efficiency, Readiness, and Mission Accomplishment in the Maritime Domain"**.

RRP Electronics to set up first semiconductor plant in Maharashtra

- **RRP Electronics** has tied up with a consortium of **European companies** to set up a **one-of-its-kind semiconductor facility in Maharashtra**.

Key Points:

- The company, which will invest **₹5,000 crore over the next five years**, plans to **lay the foundation stone in its new premises of 25,000 sq ft on March 23**.
- In the **second phase**, it will invest another **₹5,000 crore**.

About:

- RRP Electronics will **fast-track the work on the project and commence the Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Testing (OSAT)** with adequate support of technology partners.
- The facility will also **have an R & D centre** to incorporate the latest developments in the field.
- The company will also **seek support from the Maharashtra Government to set up the unit comprising multi lines of OSAT fab foundry and manufacturing**.

Maharashtra to vote in five phases for first-time ever

- For the **first time ever**, **Lok Sabha elections to the 48 seats in Maharashtra** will be held in **five phases beginning on April 19 and ending on May 20th** when the six seats in Mumbai go to the polls.

Key Points:

- In **2019**, the polls were conducted over **four phases** while in **2014**, there were **three phases**.
- The **first phase will begin in the Vidarbha region**.
- The **by-poll for the Akola West assembly seat will also be held during the second phase of voting**.
- The decision about the **number of phases has been taken by the Election Commission of India (ECI)**.

Maharashtra becomes first Indian state to buy land in Kashmir to construct 'Bhawan' for tourists

- **Maharashtra** is set to become the **first Indian state to buy land in union territory Jammu**

and Kashmir in order to construct a tourist facility for the state's people.

About:

- The Maharashtra Bhawan will come up on **2.5 acres of land at Ichgam, near Srinagar airport.**
- The **Jammu and Kashmir government has approved the transfer of land to the Maharashtra government for ₹8.16 crore.**
- The process to **purchase land was initiated after Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde visited the union territory last year in June and met Governor Manoj Sinha.**

Global Recycling Day

- **Global Recycling Day is an annual event on March 18 that helps to acknowledge that recycling is a key part of a circular economy that helps to protect the environment and Earth's natural resources**

History:

- It was the **brainchild of the Bureau of International Recycling, with the first announcement coming in 2015 by its president, Ranjit Singh Baxi.**
- The **inaugural celebration followed a few years later in 2018.**
- The day is now **recognized by the United Nations as well.**

About:

- The year **2024 marks the 7th Global Recycling Day**
- **Global Recycling Day 2024 focuses on the theme #RecyclingHeroes.**

Survey to identify divyangs in 30 districts of state

- The **Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) welfare department of the state ordered a survey to identify divyangs in different districts of MH.**
- A **total of 21 disabilities have been identified based on which the population of divyangs will be recorded.**
- While sanctioning **Rs 25 lakh for the survey work, additional secretary Adhikrao Budhe has asked for accomplishing the survey work within the next two months.**

About:

- The exercise will be carried out as per **enabling provisions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPWD Act)**

- **It was passed by the Parliament in the year 2016 and implemented from 2017.**

MH allocates Rs 50 crore for establishment of welfare board for auto, taxi drivers

- The state government has **announced the establishment of a welfare board for auto rickshaw and metered taxi drivers**
- The state allocated **Rs 50 crore for the purpose.**
- The welfare board will have the **headquarters in Mumbai.**

Key Points:

- In addition to the establishment of a welfare board, **drivers and their relatives can also avail benefits from extended schemes under the welfare board.**
- Schemes **such as health insurance, scholarships for the drivers' children, and financial insurance up to Rs 50,000 will be listed under the welfare board.**

Schools in Maha to be graded from A+ to C

- The state education department has ordered that schools in Maharashtra, like higher educational institutions, will now be **given grades from A+ to C to indicate the quality of education being imparted by them.**
- The schools will have to **display these grades and the state, too, will develop a dedicated website of aggregated data on these gradings so that the information is easily accessible to parents.**
- Furthermore, schools will have to be **evaluated (graded) periodically based on their performance under various parameters such as basic infrastructure, teaching-learning standards, safety and security of children, and campus inclusiveness and gender equality**

Key Points:

- The state school education department has **introduced the School Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (SQAAF).**
- This framework **outlines a set of parameters for evaluating schools.**
- By acting as a benchmark, **SQAAF helps schools identify areas of strength and weakness, ultimately guiding them towards continuous improvement.**
- This aligns with the **National Education Policy's (NEP) emphasis on enhancing educational quality.**

VU collaborates with IIT-B to set up innovation cell

- Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) has collaborated with the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT-B) to establish an innovation cell.
- This cell will focus on fostering a culture of creativity and entrepreneurship among students and faculty at both institutions.
- The innovation cell will provide resources and support for developing new ideas and bringing them to market.
- It is expected to play a key role in driving technological advancements and creating new businesses.

International Day of Happiness

- Every March 20th, the world celebrates the International Day of Happiness.
- It was established by the United Nations in 2012
- It recognizes happiness as a fundamental human goal and the importance of well-being for all.
- It highlights the link between happiness, sustainable development, and a balanced approach to economic growth.
- The world first celebrated the International Day of Happiness on March 20th, 2013.

Theme 2024:

- This year's theme is- "Reconnecting for Happiness: Building Resilient Communities".

Maharashtra introduces dress code for school teachers; t-shirts, jeans not allowed

- The Maharashtra government introduced a new dress code for teachers in the state.
- T-shirts, jeans, and shirts with designs or pictures are no longer allowed.

About:

- Schools have the flexibility to choose specific colors, but recommendations include light-colored shirts and dark trousers for male teachers and sarees or salwar kameez for female teachers.
- This dress code applies to all schools, including private institutions.
- Also, the government also allows teachers to use the prefix "Tr" before their names, similar to doctors and lawyers.

AI-based chatbot to help power consumers

- Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co Ltd (MSEDCL) has launched a chatbot service, 'Urja', based on artificial intelligence (AI) to help consumers with grievance redressal, bill payment and new connection.
- The service is available on MSEDCL's website www.mahadiscom.in and will soon be on the mobile phone application as well.
- The chatbot will come handy as many consumers face issues with the services provided.

Cabinet okays AI use by cops, ₹23cr for 'MARVEL' project

- The state cabinet approved a proposal for the use of artificial intelligence in the police force.
- A special purpose vehicle (SPV) is to be set up for the creation of artificial intelligence in the police force.
- To be called Maharashtra Advanced Research and Vigilance for Advanced Law Enforcement (MARVEL), govt will invest Rs 23 crore in the project and partner with Indian Institute of Management, Nagpur, and Pinaka Technologies.

World Oral Health Day

- World Oral Health Day is observed annually on March 20th
- This day raises awareness about the critical role oral hygiene plays in overall health.
- This day aims to empower individuals with the knowledge and tools to maintain good oral health through:
 - Brushing and flossing regularly
 - Limiting sugary drinks and unhealthy foods
 - Scheduling regular dental checkups

Theme:

- The 2024 theme is "A Happy Mouth is a Happy Body"
- It emphasizes the connection between oral health and well-being.

International Day of Forests

- The International Day of Forests is celebrated every year on 21st March
- This day is dedicated to raising awareness about the vital role forests play in our lives.

About:

- **International Day of Forests** was established by resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on November 28, 2013.

Key points:

- Forests are viewed as the **lungs of the planet**.
- Trees **filter the air by decreasing CO2** and helping maintain a balance in the environment.
- They are fundamental for **sustaining life on the planet** and play a significant part in **battling climate change**.
- In any case, the danger of **deforestation and degradation** threatens the survival of forests around the world.

Theme:

- This year's theme is **"Forests and Innovation: New Solutions for a Better World."**
- It highlights the **critical role of innovation and technology** in protecting our forests.

43 Maharashtra colleges get a grant of Rs 5 cr each, 2 from Mumbai

- **43 institutions in the state** will receive the grant of **Rs 5 crore each** under the **Pradhan Mantri Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA)**.
- Dadar's Kirti College and Chembur's Vivekanand Education Society's College of Arts, Science and Commerce are among them
- Additionally, four districts have been identified for gender inclusion and equity initiatives, for which almost Rs 10 crore each have been allocated.

About:

- PM-USHA is a **centrally sponsored scheme** that **aims to provide strategic funding to eligible state higher educational institutions**.
- The scheme was **launched in 2013** and is **currently in its second phase**.

The objectives of PM-USHA are to:

- Improve the quality of teaching-learning processes in order to produce employable and competitive graduates, post-graduates and PhDs.
- Increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education.
- Promote equity and inclusion in higher education.
- Strengthen the research and innovation ecosystem in higher education institutions.

Maha govt sanctions ₹2cr for Belagavi, Bidar

- Maharashtra govt has sanctioned a **special fund of Rs 2 crore** for various works in the border districts- **Belagavi and Bidar**.
- The fund has been sanctioned to various organizations and trusts.
- **Rs 25 lakh each** has been sanctioned to construct **Maharashtra sanskritik bhavans** in **Nippani and Bidar towns**
- Also, **Rs 25 lakh** has been sanctioned for the construction of a **community hall at Raghunath Maharaj Education Institute in Bidar**.
- Another **Rs 25 lakh** has been allotted to **Satyam Shivam Sundaram Development Association** in Bidar.
- Funds were also approved for various service organizations to set up libraries, build classrooms and halls and purchase medical vans.

MH Govt offers free shooting at Government locations; introduces single-window clearance for filmmakers

- The Maharashtra government has **introduced two new initiatives to promote filmmaking in the state**
- These initiatives are expected to **make Maharashtra a more attractive destination for filmmakers and boost the state's film industry**.

Initiatives

Free Shooting at Government Locations:

- Filmmakers can now shoot at government locations for free.
- This will help reduce production costs and provide filmmakers with more diverse shooting locations.

Single-Window Clearance:

- The government has also introduced a single-window clearance system for filmmakers.
- This will streamline the permission process and make it easier for filmmakers to get the approvals they need.

World Sparrow Day

- World Sparrow Day is celebrated on **March 20th every year**
- It is **dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of conserving sparrows and other common birds in urban environments**.

About:

- The **Nature Forever Society of India**, along with other organizations around the world, started **World Sparrow Day** in 2010.
- The idea hatched during a casual discussion at the **Nature Forever Society in India**, founded by conservationist **Mohammed Dilawar**.
- Inspired by efforts to save the house sparrow, they proposed a day to raise awareness about the decline of these common birds.

Theme 2024:

- The theme for World Sparrow Day 2024 is "**Love Sparrows**".
- This theme highlights the special connection between humans and sparrows.

IUCN: Endangered

World Water Day

- **World Water Day** is an annual **United Nations observance day** held on **22 March**
- It highlights the importance of freshwater and advocates for the sustainable management of freshwater resources.

About:

- The first **World Water Day** was celebrated in **1993**
- The theme for the first **World Water Day** in **1993** was '**Water for Life**.'

Theme 2024:

- This year's theme is "**Water for Peace**."
- It highlights the **potential of water as a resource for cooperation and stability**.
- By managing water resources sustainably and ensuring equitable access, we can foster peace and prosperity for all.

SDG:

- **Clean water and sanitation** is **SDG 5** out of **17 SDGs**.

41% water in Maharashtra's dams

- Despite recent rains, Maharashtra's dams only hold around **41% of their total water storage capacity**.
- This marks a significant **decline from the 56.5% capacity** recorded last year at the same time.
- This is a significant concern, as **over 70% of the state's talukas** are facing **drought conditions**.
- The arid **Marathwada region**, known for its **water scarcity**, is particularly hard-hit, with

dam water storage plummeting to **21.3% of capacity** compared to **46%** during the same period last year.

ICMAI Sambhajnagar chapter wins award at national level

- The **Institute of Cost Accountants of India (ICMAI)**, local chapter, has won the award for the **best chapter of the year for 2022-23**.
- This prestigious recognition was presented at the **Western India Regional Cost Conference-2024** held in **Indore, Madhya Pradesh**.
- The chapter's dedication to **servicing students, members, and the wider community** for the past **35 years** in the **Marathwada and Khandesh regions** was highlighted.
- Their efforts to **promote the cost and management accountancy profession** and raise awareness about career prospects in both government and private sectors were acknowledged.

BMC gets a new municipal commissioner

- **IAS Bhusan Gagrani** was appointed the new **Municipal Commissioner of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC)**
- This appointment follows the **Election Commission of India's directive** for the **Maharashtra government** to fill the position.
- Gagrani, previously serving as **Additional Chief Secretary** in the **Chief Minister's Office**, brings experience in urban development to the role.

Pune Auto Expo to showcase vintage vehicles used in World War II

- The upcoming **Pune Auto Expo**, happening **April 18th to 21st** at **Creaticity in Yerwada**, will feature a special exhibit: **vintage vehicles used in World War II**
- This "**Vintage and Classic**" pavilion promises a **unique opportunity** to see these **historic machines** alongside other classic cars from **Pune's past**.
- Motorcycles such as the **Norton 500** and **vintage editions of Volkswagen**, which played crucial roles during the **1930s-1940s war period**, will be **exhibited** in Pune next month.

- The expo will also boast vintage cars once owned by prominent figures.

'Nagmoney 2024' to bring alive history through coins

- The Numismatic Research Institute (NRI) Nagpur is once again organizing a three-day 'All India Competitive Numismatic Exhibition' called 'Nagmoney 2024' at Ramgopal Maheshwari Sanskrutik Sabhagruha on Jan 26, 27, and 28.
- The Institute aims at preserving the ancient heritage, culture and history through the medium of coins to make people aware of the importance of Numismatics

Did you Know?

- Numismatics is the study of coins

Martyrs' Day

- In India, March 23rd is commemorated as Martyrs' Day, also known as Shaheed Diwas.
- This day specifically honors the sacrifices of three legendary freedom fighters: Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev Thapar, and Shivaram Rajguru.

About:

- These three revolutionaries were hanged by the British Raj in 1931 for their role in resisting British rule.
- Martyrs' Day serves as a day to remember all those who fought and died for India's freedom.
- It's a time to express gratitude for their sacrifices and reflect on the importance of freedom.

Note:

- January 30th is also celebrated as Martyr's day.
- It commemorates the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, the "Father of the Nation," in 1948.

Climate change risk: Study

- A recent study suggests temperatures during Holi could soar above 40°C due to climate change.
- This rise in scorching temperatures is a significant increase compared to the 1970s.

About:

- In the 1970s, only three states in India had a more than 5% chance of seeing temperatures cross 40 degrees Celsius during Holi—Maharashtra, Bihar, Chhattisgarh.
- Today, that number has expanded to include six more states, including Rajasthan, Gujarat, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Andhra Pradesh.
- The state with the highest probability of crossing 40C in late March is Maharashtra, with a 14% likelihood.
- The analysis by Climate Central highlights a troubling trend: hotter springs with summers arriving earlier and lasting longer.
- This finding underscores the urgency of addressing climate change to protect traditional celebrations and public health.

Note:

- The warming trends were detected in a new analysis from US-based Climate Central (an independent group of scientists & communicators) that looked at monthly average temperatures in the months of March and April since 1970.

JSW Energy buys Rel Power's wind assets for ₹132cr

- In a move to expand its renewable energy portfolio, JSW Energy, through its subsidiary JSW Renewable Energy, has agreed to purchase a 45 MW wind power project from Reliance Power for ₹132 crore.
- The project is located in Vashpet, Maharashtra, and has a power purchase agreement with Adani Electricity.
- This acquisition strengthens JSW Energy's position in the renewable energy sector and aligns with India's growing focus on sustainable power generation.
- The funds from the sale will be used by Reliance Power to repay debt

World Poetry Day

- World Poetry Day is celebrated annually on March 21st
- It is a day to celebrate the beauty and significance of poetry.
- It was established by UNESCO in 1999

It aims to:

1. Promote linguistic diversity:

- Poetry uses language in creative ways, highlighting the richness of different cultures and languages.
- 2. **Support endangered languages:**
 - World Poetry Day brings attention to languages at risk of disappearing, ensuring their voices are heard.
- 3. **Honor poets and revive traditions:**
 - It's a day to recognize the contributions of poets and encourage the oral tradition of poetry recitals.
- 4. **Make poetry accessible:**
 - World Poetry Day promotes the reading, writing, teaching, and enjoyment of poetry for everyone.

Theme:

- The theme for World Poetry Day 2024 is **"Standing on the Shoulders of Giants."**

World Down Syndrome Day

- **World Down Syndrome Day is celebrated annually on March 21st**
- It is a day to **raise awareness about Down syndrome and celebrate the contributions of people with Down syndrome.**
- The **date, 3/21, reflects the triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome that causes Down syndrome.**
- This day was **officially recognized by the United Nations in 2012.**

About:

- Down's syndrome is a **genetic disorder** caused when **abnormal cell division** results in **extra genetic material from chromosome 21 (trisomy 21).**
- This extra copy **changes how a baby's body and brain develop.**
- It can cause **both mental and physical challenges during their lifetime.**

Theme:

- This year's **theme is 'End The Stereotypes'.**

World Meteorological Day

- **World Meteorological Day is celebrated on March 23rd every year.**
- It marks the **anniversary of the establishment of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1950.**
- The day **highlights the importance of weather and climate information for society's safety and well-being.**

Theme:

- This year's theme is **"At the Frontline of Climate Action."**
- It **emphasizes the crucial role of weather observation, forecasting, and climate science** in understanding and addressing climate change.

Monthly grant to World War-II veterans and war widows by Maharashtra Government.

- The State Department of Sainik Welfare **increases the monthly grant for World War II veterans from Rs 6,000 to Rs 11,000,**
- This will benefit around **16,000 war widows and 16 veterans in Maharashtra, aged in their 90s.**
- **This amount is the highest in the country.**

About:

- During World War II (WWII), the **British government recruited numerous Indian soldiers to fight on various global battlefields from 1939 to 1945.**
- Post-war, these soldiers were repatriated **without receiving any financial benefits or recognition.**
- **After India's independence, they were not granted ex-servicemen status or monetary assistance.**
- Other states like Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, and Uttarakhand provide monthly grants ranging from Rs 6,000 to Rs 9,000 to war veterans.
- **The government has implemented the decision since January.**

Maharashtra Cash Crop Production Triples Under High Density Planting System (HDPS)

- Over **550 cotton farmers from Nagpur and Wardha districts achieved a threefold increase in cash crop production.**
- Implemented in Maharashtra during 2023-24, the **high density planting system (HDPS) pilot project facilitated this surge.**
- The central government offered a **₹16,000 per hectare incentive to encourage farmers to adopt HDPS,** aiming to boost production.
- Previously, Vidarbha farmers typically yielded 6-10 quintals of cotton per acre using conventional methods.
- Notably, a **30-year-old farmer from Wardha attained the highest yield of 19 quintals per acre.**

HDPS:

- HDPS was introduced in India by the **Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR)**, and it has shown promising results in various states, including **Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Telangana, and Tamil Nadu.**
- High Density Planting System (HDPS) is an innovative cultivation method for cotton that aims to increase yield by optimizing the use of available resources such as land, water, and nutrients. The key features of HDPS include:
 - **Narrower plant-to-plant spacing**
 - **Compact cotton varieties**
 - **Higher plant population**
 - **Efficient resource use**
 - **Reduced weed pressure**

World Tuberculosis day

- Every year on March 24th, **World Tuberculosis (TB) Day** is observed worldwide to raise awareness about the devastating health, social, and economic consequences of TB, and to step up efforts to end the global TB epidemic.
- This day commemorates the date in 1882 when **Dr. Robert Koch** announced his discovery of **Mycobacterium tuberculosis**, the bacteria that causes tuberculosis, a disease that still affects millions globally.

It aims to:

- **Raise Awareness:**
 - a. World TB Day serves as a platform to educate individuals, communities, policymakers, and healthcare professionals about the signs, symptoms, transmission, prevention, and treatment of tuberculosis.
- **Mobilize Resources:**
 - b. World TB Day mobilises resources from governments, international organisations, civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders to support TB research, innovation, and implementation of evidence-based interventions aimed at ending the TB epidemic.
- **Empower Communities:**
 - c. Empowering communities and engaging affected individuals as advocates and agents of change are key components of TB control efforts. World TB Day encourages community involvement, active participation,

Promote Partnerships:

- d. Collaboration and partnerships among governments, non-governmental organisations, academia, communities, and affected individuals are essential to achieve the ambitious targets set for ending TB.

Theme:

- **The theme for World Tuberculosis (TB) Day 2024 is "Yes! We can end TB!"**

Dr Pragma D Yadav is new director-in-charge at National Institute of One Health , Nagpur

- **Dr Pragma D Yadav**, senior scientist at the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Virology, has been appointed the **director-in-charge of the National Institute of One Health, Nagpur.**

About:

- Dr. Yadav, renowned for research on communicable diseases and viral infections, including COVID-19, will oversee NIOH Nagpur alongside her role at ICMR-NIV Pune.
- She played a pivotal role in detecting India's first COVID-19 cases and led the team behind Covaxin, the country's first indigenous vaccine.
- Dr. Yadav will wield administrative and financial authority as Director-in-Charge of NIOH Nagpur, aligning with ICMR's efforts to enhance biosafety infrastructure nationwide through the PM-ABHIM program.

Note:

- The National Institute of One Health (NIOH) focuses on interdisciplinary research at the intersection of human, animal, and environmental health.
- It aims to address global health challenges, promote collaboration between sectors, and develop holistic approaches to disease prevention and control.

Thane's Hariyali Lake

- **Thane's Hariyali Lake** is the source of pride for Chendani Koliwada residents.

About:

- **Hariyali Lake** (meaning "greenery") in Thane dries up in summer, but monsoons bring water that hides under a blanket of new

plants. This seasonal cycle inspired its name.

- The lake also supports a local fishery with 10-15 fish varieties sold in Wagle Estate.
- First Indian train used Thane's Hariyali Lake for water.

Note:

- Under the AMRUT 2.0 goal, beautification projects have been under progress.
- Residents are concerned about water quality during Thane's Hariyali Lake beautification and urge better maintenance.
- They believe the lake has potential to be a water source after proper filtration.

Discovery of Two Temple Bases in Ambajogai Excavation

- The Maharashtra Archaeology Department made a significant discovery during excavation activities near Ambajogai in Beed district.
- Two temple bases were unearthed within the Sakaleshwar temple premises, also known as the Barakhambi temple, which dates back to 1228 AD and was constructed by the Yadava dynasty.

Key points:

- The excavation, which commenced on March 15, involved the creation of 14 trenches, each measuring 100 square feet.
- Amot Gote, Assistant Director of State Archaeology, stated that among the findings were the bases of two temples, one identified as Kholeshwar, named after a Yadava general.
- Evidence such as bricks and sculpture fragments, including hands and feet, indicate that the temples once possessed shikhars.
- The project also includes plans for a survey of ancient monuments in Ambajogai, with the intention of granting the area the status of a "heritage village."
- Ambajogai, historically known by various names including Amrapur, Jayantipur, and Jogaiambe, was also referred to as Mominabad during the Hyderabad Nizam Era.
- The town boasts other notable monuments such as Hatthikhana, Dasopant Temple, and Yogeshwari temple, enriching its historical and cultural significance.

Maharashtra Govt. announced 1 day paid leave for workers on poll duty

- The Maharashtra government has announced one day of paid leave for workers, government officials, and employees on polling days within the state.
- The decision aims to facilitate the exercise of voting rights, as per a government circular issued on Tuesday.
- With elections scheduled in five phases, this initiative ensures individuals have ample opportunity to participate in the electoral process.
- Additionally, the leave provision extends to individuals residing outside their constituency, enabling them to vote in their respective areas.
- The holiday entitlement encompasses various sectors, including industrial groups, corporations, companies, institutions, as well as industrial undertakings falling under the purview of the industry department.

Note:

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) on March 16 announced general elections to the 18th Lok Sabha as well as four states - Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha and Sikkim.
- The Lok Sabha polls will be held in seven phases over the months of April and May, with over 90 crore eligible citizens voting for 543 seats of the Lower House. Results will be declared on June 4.

Power Demand Peaks to 3,500 MW, Marking the Highest Yet

- Power demand rises in Maharashtra, which is all-time highest.

About:

- Peak power demand in Mumbai surged to 3,500 MW on Tuesday, marking a notable increase.
- Across Maharashtra, the overall peak demand exceeded 28,000 MW, making it the second occurrence within a week and the highest peak demand recorded this year.
- The previous similar peak demand was observed on March 22.
- Sources indicate that the Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (MSEDCL) procured power of up to 10,000 MW from the exchange at prevailing market rates.

- However, power generation from thermal plants across the state did not surpass 7,300 MW on Tuesday.

Note:

- Maharashtra's largest thermal power plant is the **Chandrapur Super thermal power station**.
- It has the capacity of producing **2920 MW of power**.
- **Five generators of 500 MW capacity and two generators of 210 MW** are present at this power plant.
- Here, water is sourced from **Chargaon and Erai dams**, while the fuel supply is sourced from the nearest coal mines.

Wind Monitoring Safety Devices to Be Installed Along Bullet Train Corridor

An initiative has been launched to install wind monitoring safety devices, known as anemometers, at 14 locations spanning the 508 km corridor.

About:

- The **National High-Speed Rail Corridor Ltd (NHSRCL)** is taking proactive measures to address strong winds along the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail corridor.
- **Anemometers are devices designed to track wind speeds**, ensuring enhanced passenger safety and operational efficiency once the Bullet train service commences.
- According to NHSRCL officials, Bullet trains will adjust their speed when wind speeds fall within the range of 72 to 130 kmph.
- **These 14 locations include five in Maharashtra and nine in Gujarat**, strategically positioned to monitor wind patterns effectively.
- In Maharashtra, installations will be **situated near Desai Khadi, Ulhas River, Bangla Pada in Thane, Vaitarna River, and Dahanu**.
- Anemometers serve as Disaster Prevention Systems, providing real-time wind speed data **ranging from 0 to 252 kmph and covering 0 to 360 degrees**.
- The Operation Control Centre (OCC) will oversee wind speed monitoring using anemometers at various locations, ensuring timely adjustments in train speeds.
- Additionally, earthquake monitoring devices will also be deployed along the route to monitor seismic activity.
- **Seismometers will be strategically placed in traction sub-stations and switching**

posts, with six inland seismometers earmarked for installation in earthquake-prone areas across both states.

Note on Bullet Train:

- **Mumbai–Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Corridor (MAHSR) or Mumbai–Ahmedabad HSR** is an under-construction high-speed rail line, which will connect Mumbai, the **financial hub of India**, with **Ahmedabad, the largest city in the state of Gujarat**. When **completed**, it will be India's first high-speed rail line.
- Union Railway Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw** addressed the **Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit** earlier when he declared the construction on the bullet train project will be done by 2026.

World Theatre Day

- **World Theatre Day** raises the importance of theatre arts, how they play an important role in the field of entertainment and the changes that theatre brings to life

About:

International Theatre Institute (ITI) was initiated in **1961 to celebrate World Theatre Day across the world** and the value and importance of theatre. The goals of World Theatre Day, as with International Dance Day are:

- To highlight the **importance of art forms around the world**.
- **To make people aware of the importance of the value of art form**.
- To enable the dance and theatre communities to promote their work on a broad scale. To make opinion leaders aware of the value of these forms and support them.
- **To enjoy the art form for its own sake**.

Theme:

- The theme for World Theatre Day 2024 is **'Theatre and a Culture of Peace'**.

Kitchen Gardens Thrive in Over 24,000 Government Schools Across Maharashtra

- Over 24,000 govt schools in Maha run kitchen gardens

Key points:

- Over the past year, **24,741 government schools in Maharashtra have established kitchen gardens on their premises**.
- Students are responsible for maintaining these gardens under the guidance of their teachers,

and the produce is **utilized for school meal preparations.**

- A competition will be launched by the state education department to recognize the best kitchen gardens across schools statewide.
- **In the 2023-24 period, 46,946 schools in Maharashtra participated** in the Union government's kitchen garden scheme, with a budget allocation of approximately **Rs 20 crore under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2019.**
- The Union ministry of education has provided guidelines for planning kitchen gardens, specifying suitable plants, including vegetables and fruits, for cultivation.

Discovery of Four New Gecko Species in the Sahyadri Region.

- Researchers from Shivaji University, Kolhapur (SUK) and **Thackeray Wildlife Foundation have found four new species** of wild geckos in Northwest Maharashtra.
- **These geckos belong to the genus Cnemaspis and are known for their territorial behaviour.**
- They are found in a small area and prefer cooler climates, **restricting their occurrence to favourable habitats.**
- These newly **discovered geckos have only been found within their native range during research expeditions.**
- The findings have **been published in the international journal Zootaxa under the guidance of Dr. Sunil Gaikwad.**

Note:

- Geckos are reptiles and are found on all the continents except Antarctica. These colourful lizards have adapted to habitats from rainforests, to deserts, to cold mountain slopes.

Maharashtra ATS chief, a 26/11 hero, selected to lead NIA

- **Sadanand Date, a 57-year-old IPS officer recognized for his pivotal role during the 26/11 attacks,** has been appointed as the new director general of the **National Investigation Agency (NIA),** the premier counter-terrorism agency in India.
- Currently serving as the director general of the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS), Date expressed his gratitude for the

opportunity to join NIA, considering it an honour.

- Date led the operation to apprehend **Ajmal Kasab and his mentor Ismail Khan at Cama Hospital during the 26/11 attacks,** sustaining injuries in the process.
- Despite being **wounded, Date led the covert operation in November 2012 to transfer Kasab from Arthur Road Jail to Yerwada Jail in Pune,** where the terrorist was eventually executed.
- Notably, during his tenure as the **Superintendent of Police in Bhandara,** Date played a significant role in reintegrating misguided youth involved in **Naxal activities back into mainstream society, achieving notable success such as the surrender of a Naxal along with an AK-47,** a first in the state.

Villagers Rally Against 'Third Mumbai' Plan, Threaten Massive Protest

- Villagers in **Uran, Panvel, and Pen areas of Raigad district oppose the proposed 'Third Mumbai' township.**
- **Submitted objections to the government, resisting land acquisition for the project.**
- Threatened **massive agitation involving lakhs if notification is not withdrawn.**
- State government issued notifications on **March 4, handing over 124 villages around Atal Setu Mumbai Trans-Harbour Link for development to NTDA.**
- Villagers responded within the 30-day period given by the government.
- **Initially planned a massive morcha, reduced due to code of conduct.**
- Warnings of lakhs converging to protest if plan proceeds.
- **Objections submitted under "MMRDA Virodhi Shetkari Samiti, Raigad"** by gram panchayat members, social activists, and political leaders at Konkan Bhavan office.
- **Raised slogans against the plan and MMRDA.**

Note on Third Mumbai:

- Urban Development Department (UDD) seeks public input on the proposed Third Mumbai from 124 affected villages.
- Third Mumbai primarily encompasses areas influenced by the newly operational Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), also known as Atal Setu.
- Anticipated economic growth from MTHL prompts the state government to incorporate

surrounding regions into the Third Mumbai plan.

- UDD invites suggestions and objections to ensure inclusive development in the affected areas.
- MTHL's impact on regional and state-level economic development drives the government's decision to leverage its potential.

Bombay High Court Appoints 11 Permanent Judges.

- **Eleven additional judges were elevated to permanent positions at Bombay High Court.**
- Swearing-in ceremony held in the Central Court Hall of the Bombay High Court building.
- **High Court judges from Goa, Nagpur, and Aurangabad benches participated virtually.**
- Justices Kishore Chandrakant Sant, Kamal Khata, Sharmila Deshmukh, Sandeep Marne, Gauri Godse, Rajesh Shantaram Patil, and Arif Doctor sworn in at the Principal Seat.
- **Justice Valmiki S.A. Menezes sworn in at the Goa Bench.**
- **Justice Arun Pedneker sworn in at the Aurangabad Bench.**
- **Justices Urmila Sachin Joshi-Phalke and Bharat Pandurang Deshpande sworn in at the Nagpur Bench.**

Pune's Water Crisis

- **Pune, facing a deepening water crisis, witnesses a concerning situation as its four main dams approach critically low levels.**

Key points:

- **Khadakwasla reservoir:** Currently holds 1.07 TMC, which is 54.39% of its total storage.
- **Panshet reservoir:** At 48.10% capacity with 5.12 TMC.
- **Temghar reservoir:** Dwindles at 9.11% capacity, holding only 0.34 TMC.
- **Warasgaon dam:** Fairing slightly better at 53.40% capacity, with 6.85 TMC of water.

Impact:

- **Borewells in Pune have dried up due to the diminishing groundwater levels.**
- Residents face a severe water shortage, resorting to water tankers for daily needs.
- Manjri area residents bear the brunt with exorbitant charges from tanker owners, exacerbating their difficulties.

Sinhagad Fort to Implement Plastic Ban

- The Junnar forest department has decided to ban plastic at Sinhagad Fort, following the **successful implementation at Shivneri Fort.**
- This decision, effective from June 5, aims to preserve the sanctity of the fort and protect the environment.

About:

- **Sinhagad is an ancient hill fortress** located at around **49 km southwest of the city of Pune, India.**
- Previously known as **Kondhana**, the fort had been the site of many battles, most notably the **Battle of Sinhagad in 1670.**
- It is located in the Pune district in Maharashtra.

Sambhajnagar District to Have 45 Model Polling Stations

- **Sambhajnagar district is set to have 45 model polling stations for the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections.**

Key points:

- Among these, **18 polling stations will be exclusively managed by female staff**, while 18 will be **run by youth staff**. The remaining nine stations will be operated by **staff with Disabilities (PwD).**
- District collector Dilip Swami highlighted that **model polling stations will offer additional amenities to enhance the voting experience beyond the basic facilities available at regular polling stations.**
- Aurangabad central and Aurangabad west will each host five model polling stations, with five more in Kannad, Gangapur, Vaijapur, Sillod, Paithan, and Phulambri. Additionally, three stations will be set up in the Aurangabad east assembly segment.

Two SUK researchers get patent for energy device

- Two researchers, **Dr. Sagar Delekar and Swapnajit Mulik, from Shivaji University Kolhapur (SUK)** were granted a patent by the government on Thursday for their energy storage device utilizing nano-composites.

Key points:

- The device aims to enhance the capacity of supercapacitors through cathodes made from nanocomposite-based materials.

- Materials such as nickel cobaltite, cobalt oxide, and porous carbon have been utilized for these supercapacitor devices.
- The nano-composite is expected to enhance device efficiency, potentially revolutionizing the energy sector.
- Dr. Delekar highlighted the device's cost-effectiveness and its potential in energy conservation, offering solutions to societal energy challenges.

Focus on National Education Policy (NEP) in 2024-25

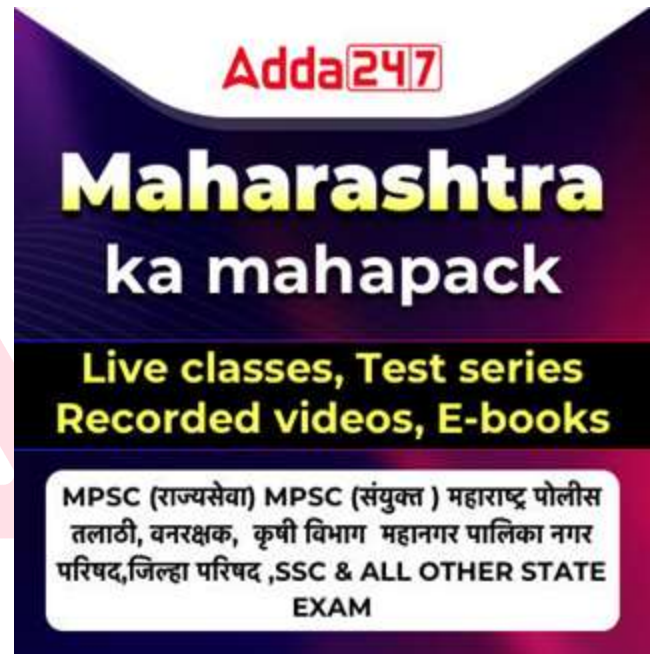
- Pune's steering committee, led by Nitin Karmalkar, plans **changes to the National Education Policy (NEP) in 2024-25**, focusing on Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) courses.
- They aim to emphasize **ancient knowledge like mathematics, science, medicine, philosophy, arts, languages, and more.**

Key points:

- The **steering committee for NEP 2020** implementation in Maharashtra observed that some higher educational institutes were teaching "**religion, jingoism, and blind hero-worship**" under the IKS course subjects.
- Changes are planned to address this issue, with a focus on improving the quality of IKS courses.
- A sub-committee has been formed to **outline dos and don'ts for the IKS curriculum, ensuring it aligns with the goals of NEP 2020.**
- Nitin Karmalkar emphasized that **IKS should focus on imparting ancient knowledge of Indian civilization, such as mathematics,**

science, medicine, astronomy, architecture, philosophy, arts, languages, literature, and culture.

- A new circular issued by the state's higher education department allows students to choose a maximum of three subjects in the first year of their undergraduate program and decide on their major and minor subjects in the following year.



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