

April - 30

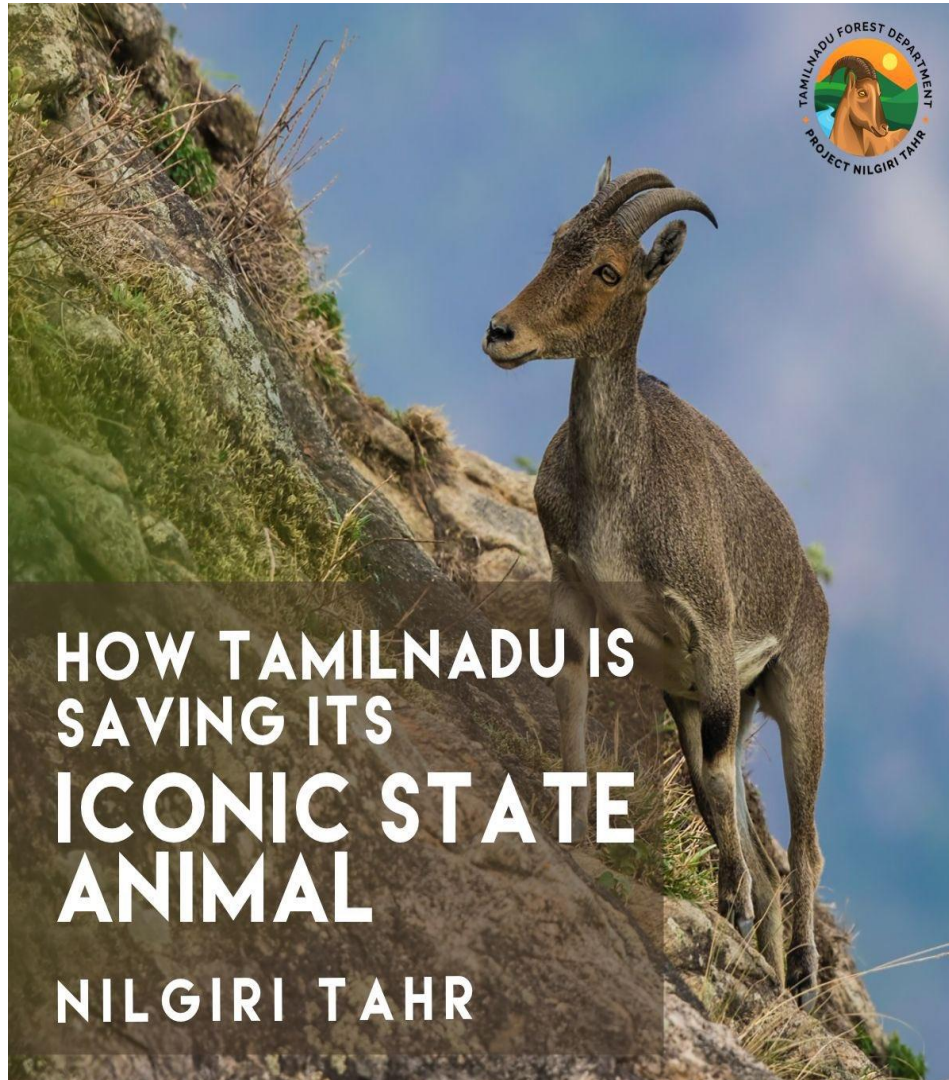
## TNPSC BITS

- ❖ The BJP candidate from Surat in Gujarat, Mukesh Dalal, was declared elected unopposed after Congress candidate was rejected, while all other candidates withdrew from the fray.
- ❖ Yuvraj Singh was named ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 Ambassador.
- ❖ NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore will be the pilots of the Crew Flight Test mission aboard Boeing's Starliner spacecraft to International Space Station.
- ❖ The Indian Navy has carried out an extensive exercise along the East Coast as part of efforts to check its preparedness to meet any maritime security challenges.
- ❖ DRDO has developed India's lightest bullet proof jacket for protection against highest threat level 6 of BIS.
- ❖ The union government has formed a three-member committee under Atul Goel to finalize a list of OTC (over-the-counter) drugs that will be available for purchase in general stores without a prescription.
- ❖ Ministry of Finance, Government of India has granted the Navratna Status to National Fertilizers Limited.
- ❖ The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) on the occasion of Earth Day unveiled its Climate Strategy 2030 document which aims to address India's need for green financing.
- ❖ The Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation Cell (SVEEP) of Kamrup Election District along with the IIT Guwahati developed a 3D-printed dummy ballot unit to enhance voter awareness and engagement.
- ❖ The Indian Naval Sailing Vessel INSV Tarini returned to her base port at Goa after India's first 2 month long transoceanic expedition by two women officers of the Indian Navy.
  - The expedition was made by the Lieutenant Commander Dilna K. and Lieutenant Commander Roopa A.
- ❖ Tiger Conservation Conference 2024 was hosted by Bhutan to mobilize \$1 billion in new funding over the next decade for the preservation of tiger landscapes across Asia.
  - The theme of the event is "Sustainable Finance for Tiger Landscape.

- ❖ International Jazz Day is celebrated on April 30 to raise the awareness of the virtues of jazz as an educational tool, and a force for empathy, dialogue and enhanced cooperation among people.

## TAMIL NADU

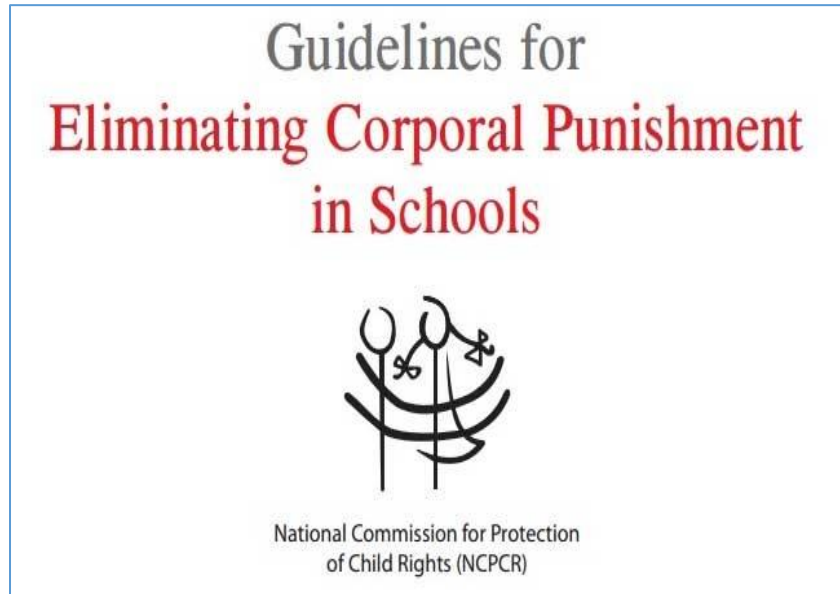
### Nilgiri Tahr survey



- ❖ With a resolve to remove the Nilgiri Tahr (*Nilgiritragus hylocrius*) from the endangered status, the Tamil Nadu government is executing a synchronised survey of the State animal.
- ❖ IUCN representative is also a part in the exercise as an observer.
- ❖ The animal is listed as an endangered species by the IUCN and protected under Schedule-I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

- ❖ At present, there are around 3,000 Tahr in the Western Ghats, according to a report released by the World Wildlife Fund India in 2015.

### **Guidelines for elimination of corporal punishment**



- ❖ The Tamil Nadu School Education Department has issued Guidelines for the Elimination of Corporal Punishment in Schools (GECPP).
- ❖ It includes safeguarding the mental well-being of students and conducting awareness camps to familiarise stakeholders with guidelines of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) for effective implementation.
- ❖ The Madras High Court has directed the TN government to implement GECPP provided by the NCPCR.
- ❖ The corporal punishment was unacceptable, as outlined in Section 17(1) of the Rights of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009.

## **INTERNATIONAL**

### **Renaming of UNCTAD**

- ❖ The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was rebranded as "UN Trade and Development".
- ❖ This permanent intergovernmental body is commemorating its 60th anniversary this year.
- ❖ It was established by the UNGA in 1964 and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

- ❖ It aims to maximize the benefits of globalization and liberalization while reducing the costs to the weaker economies.



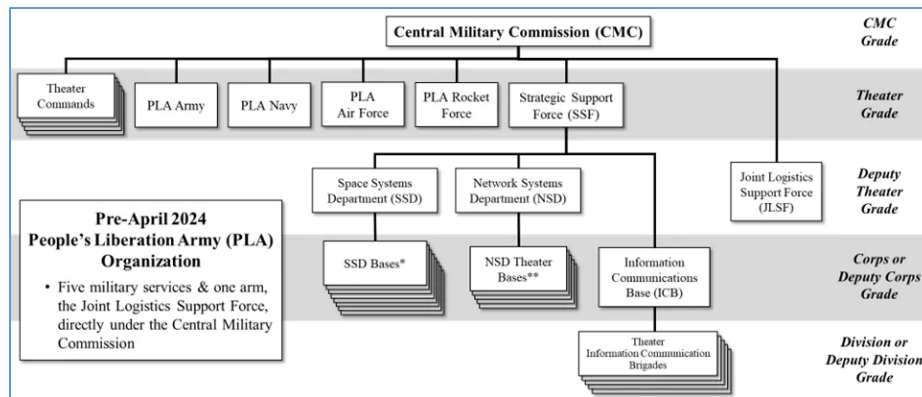
### **30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Marrakesh Agreement**



- ❖ The Marrakesh Agreement establishing the World Trade Organization was signed on 15 April 1994.

- ❖ It led to the birth of the WTO on 1 January 1995.
- ❖ The WTO incorporates the principles of the GATT and provides a more enduring institutional framework for implementing and extending them.
- ❖ Now, WTO has 164 member countries and 23 observer governments.

## Military reorganization of China



- ❖ China has created new independent People's Liberation Army (PLA) units for information, space and cyber operations in its new reorganization.
- ❖ The PLA now consists of four branches -- ground, navy, air and rocket -- as well as four arms -- information, aerospace, cyber and joint logistics support.
- ❖ The old Strategic Support Force was broken up and replaced with the three new arms.
- ❖ The Information Support Force will aim to “speed up military modernisation and effectively implement the mission of the people’s armed forces in the new era”.
- ❖ It is removed from the Strategic Support Force, which was set up in 2015.

## New Schengen Visa Rules for Indians

- ❖ The European Union (EU) recently introduced a revamped visa system tailored specifically for Indian nationals.
- ❖ This new system is allowing Indians access to long-term, multi-entry Schengen visas.
- ❖ Normally a Schengen visa permits a brief stay of up to 90 days within a 180-day timeframe.
- ❖ The Indian travellers can now obtain a two-year Schengen visa, a marked improvement from the shorter validity periods previously available.

- ❖ To qualify for this extended two-year visa, the applicants must have acquired and appropriately utilised two Schengen visas within the preceding three years.

## NEW SCHENGEN VISA RULES FOR INDIANS

- Multiple entries allowed on the same visa
- Access to 29 European countries in the Schengen area (of which 25 are EU states)
- Travel rights equivalent to visa-free nationals
- Two-year validity, after having obtained and lawfully used two visas within the previous three years.
- Two-year visa will be followed by a five-year visa, if the passport has sufficient validity remaining
- 0-day short stays allowed in any 180-day period
- Visas are not purpose-bound, but do not grant the right to work



### Project Nimbus



- ❖ Project Nimbus is a \$1.2 billion contract awarded to Google and Amazon.com in 2021 to supply the Israeli government with cloud services.

- ❖ It is to provide Israel with public cloud services in order to address challenges in various sectors of the country like healthcare, transportation, and education.
- ❖ The Israel government employees and senior leaders of the country will also get training to enhance their digital skill.

## ECONOMY

### Upgradable ATM machine

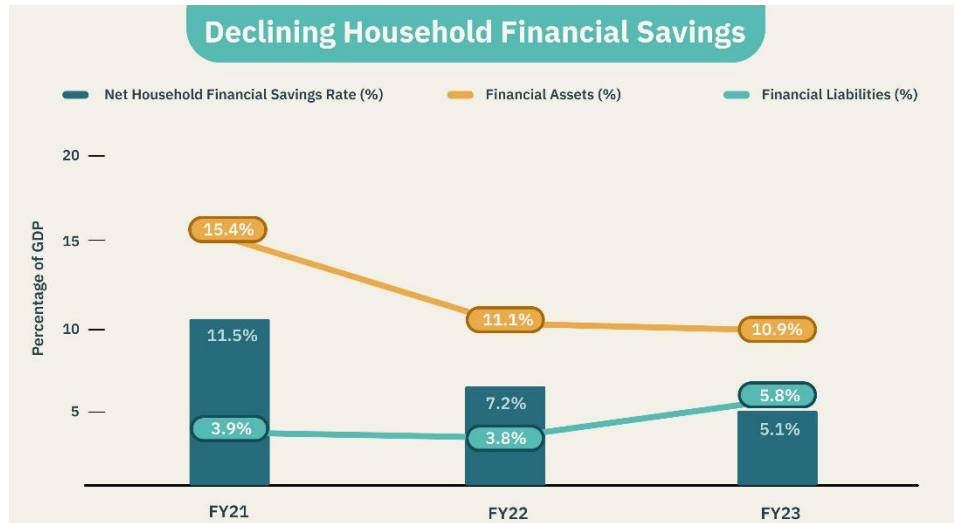


- ❖ Hitachi Payment Services has announced the launch of an upgradable ATM machine in India.
- ❖ These ATMs can be upgraded to a Cash Recycling Machine (CRM) at any time.
- ❖ This is the first upgradable ATM in India.
- ❖ The Upgradable ATM, will allow banks to safeguard their investment and expand their services to include cash deposit facility at offsite locations.

### Declining of net Household Savings

- ❖ RBI says India's net household savings stood at a 47-year-old low.
- ❖ The net Household Savings contracting to a mere 5.3% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the financial year 2023.
- ❖ It is a significant drop from the 7.3% recorded in 2022.
- ❖ There has also been a sharp jump in household debt in the same period.

- ❖ The Annual borrowings stood at 5.8% of GDP - the second-highest level after the 1970s.



### India's Pharmaceutical Exports 2024



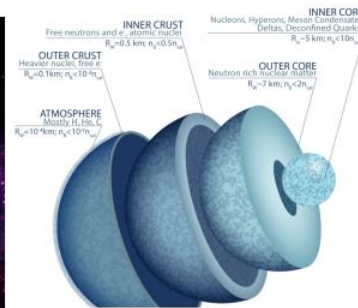
- ❖ The country's drugs and pharmaceuticals exports increased 9.67 per cent year-on-year to USD 27.9 billion in 2023-24.
- ❖ But the total exports dipped by 3 per cent in the last fiscal.
- ❖ Pharma exports in March grew by 12.73 per cent to USD 2.8 billion. In 2022-23, the exports stood at USD 25.4 billion.
- ❖ The top five export markets, for the sector during the last fiscal, are the US, the UK, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, South Africa and Brazil.



- ❖ The US accounts for over 31 per cent of India's total pharma exports, followed by the UK and Netherlands (about 3 per cent each).

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Rare Giant Flare from Magnetar

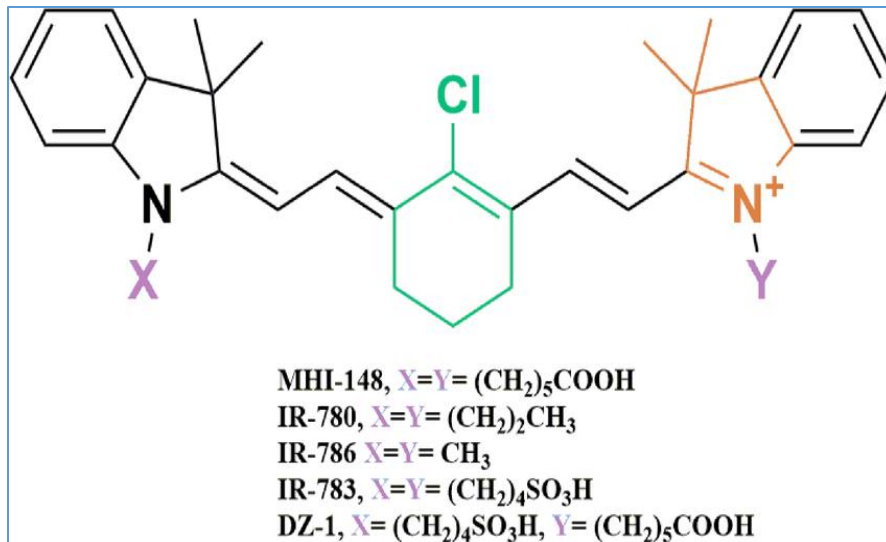


- ❖ The Scientists have now detected the most distant-known instance of one of these eruptions, called a giant flare from a magnetar.
- ❖ This magnetar is residing in a galaxy called Messier 82, or M82.
- ❖ This surge of gamma rays unleashed in just a tenth of a second the amount of energy our sun would emit in a span of roughly 10,000 years.
- ❖ The M82 giant flare was the most distant known but not the most energetic.
- ❖ The one spotted in 2004 had the energy equivalent to about a million years of output from the sun.
- ❖ Magnetars are among the universe's most extreme objects.
- ❖ It is a class of the compact stellar remnants called neutron stars that possess immensely strong magnetic fields.
- ❖ Only two confirmed giant flares have been observed in our Milky Way galaxy, in 2004 and 1998.
- ❖ Only one observed in another galaxy, in 1979 in the Milky Way's neighbouring Large Magellanic Cloud.

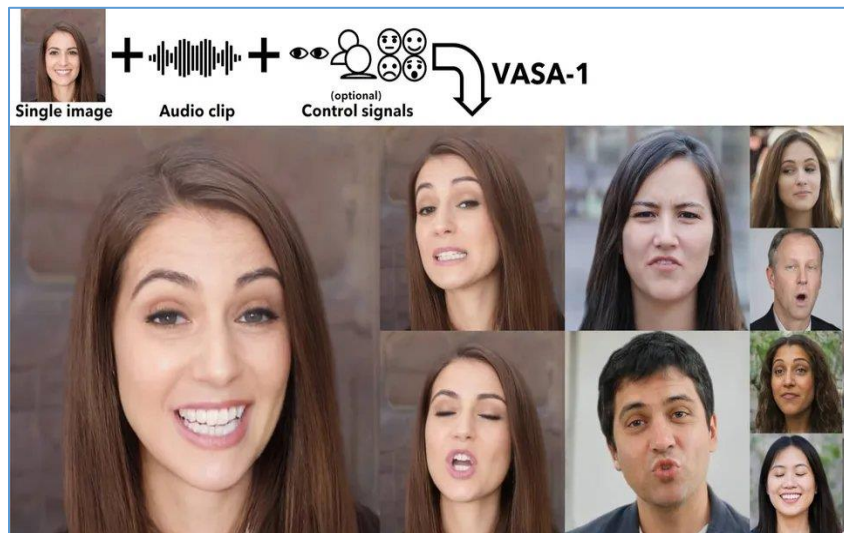
### Molecular Jackhammers

- ❖ There are “four pillars” of cancer treatment: Surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, and immunotherapy.
- ❖ Cancer cells can become resistant to nearly every kind of conventional treatment.
- ❖ Researchers introduced another pillar of treatment called mechanical therapy to help improve patient outcomes.

- ❖ The team has found a way to destroy cancer cells using a type of molecule called a cyanine.
- ❖ Cyanine dyes vibrate at up to 40 trillion oscillations per second when exposed to near-infrared light.
- ❖ Anything that is surrounded by the molecules will be disassembled very quickly.
- ❖ The researchers call this as the “molecular jackhammer” effect.
- ❖ The molecular jackhammer on human melanoma cells they were able to destroy 100% of them.



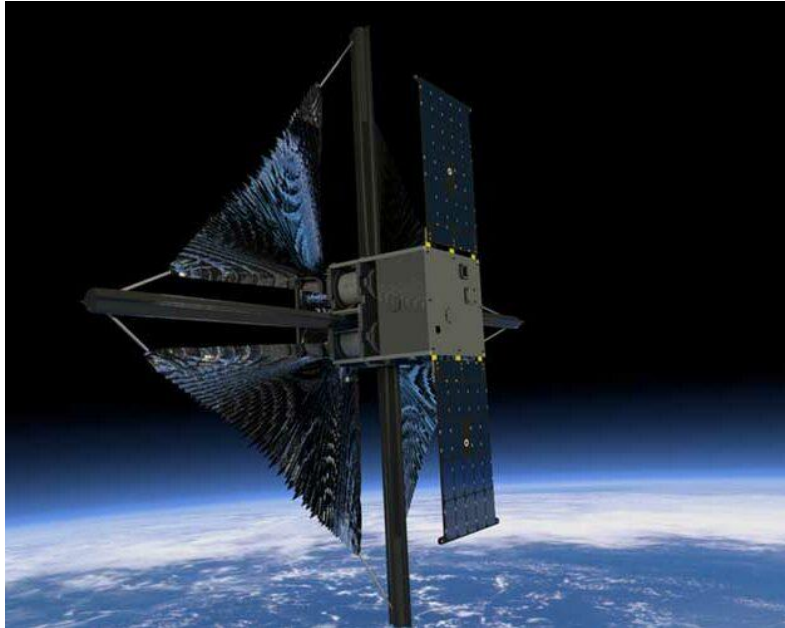
### Microsoft's VASA-1



- ❖ Microsoft recently introduced a new image-to-video model called VASA-1.

- ❖ VASA-1, as an AI model, produces 'lifelike audio-driven talking faces generated in real time'.
- ❖ 'VAS' in the name stands for visual affective skill.
- ❖ The model is capable of handling types of photos and audio inputs that were not in the training dataset.

### **NASA's ACS3 Mission**



- ❖ NASA's next-generation solar sail technology, known as the Advanced Composite Solar Sail System (ACS3), was lifted recently.
- ❖ Upon reaching its Sun-synchronous orbit approximately 600 miles above Earth, the ACS3 spacecraft will commence the intricate process of unfurling its composite booms.
- ❖ Within approximately 25 minutes, the solar sail will be fully deployed, measuring about 860 square feet.
- ❖ These sheets, together, form a kite-like solar sail.
- ❖ It harnesses the momentum of photons emitted by the sun, using large, reflective surfaces to propel spacecraft without traditional fuel.

### **Crystal Maze 2 Missile**

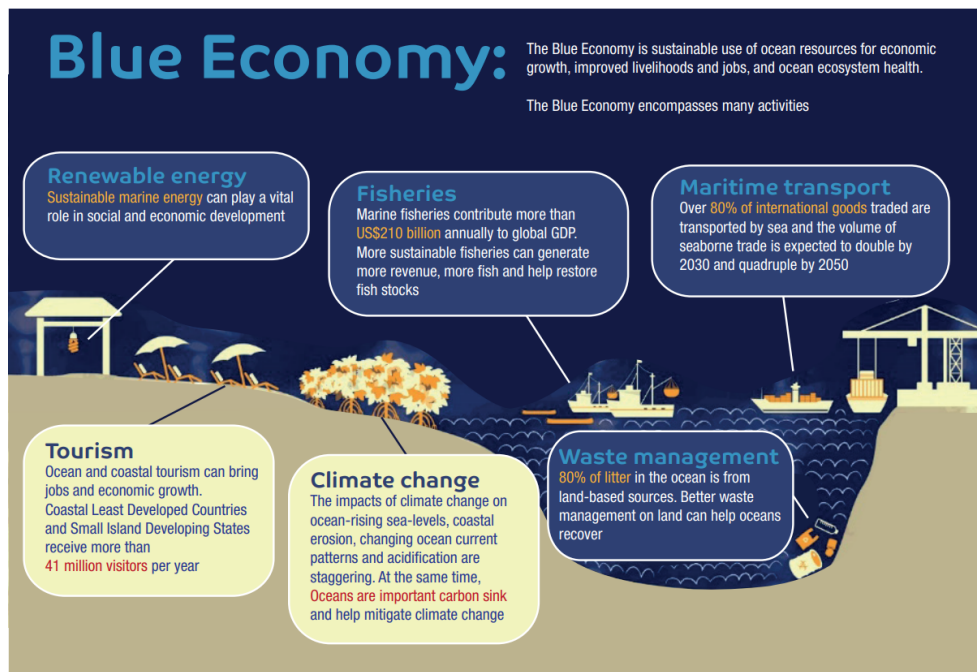
- ❖ The Indian Air Force (IAF) has successfully carried out a test firing of a new version of an air-to-surface medium-range ballistic missile.
- ❖ It is capable of hitting targets at a distance exceeding 250 km.

- ❖ The missile is also referred to as ROCKS or Crystal Maze 2.
- ❖ Its predecessor Crystal Maze 1 was inducted into the Indian Air Force from Israel.



## ENVIRONMENT

### IUCN report on Blue Economy



- ❖ The IUCN has released a report titled “Towards a Regenerative Blue Economy – Mapping the Blue Economy”
- ❖ It proposed a definition and principles for a Regenerative Blue Economy (RBE).
- ❖ The RBE model aims for effective regeneration and protection of ocean ecosystems, along with sustainable economic activities and fair prosperity.

- ❖ It emphasizes the protection, restoration, and resilience of marine ecosystems, prioritizing inclusion, fairness, and indigenous rights and the ecosystem preservation.
- ❖ It is excluding activities like oil extraction and deep-sea mining for carbon reduction.

## Paro Statement



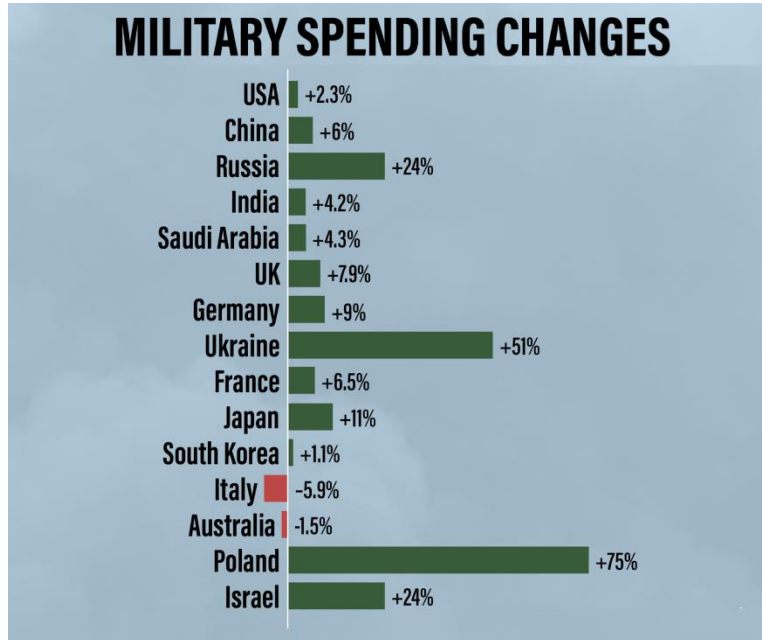
- ❖ The Sustainable Finance for Tiger Landscapes Conference was concluded with the Paro Statement by the Government of Bhutan in partnership with the Tiger Conservation Coalition.
- ❖ It is inviting participants to join the shared commitment to mobilise an additional 1 billion USD to conserve tigers and tiger landscapes over the next ten years.
- ❖ In addition to securing and increasing the global tiger population, these funds will contribute to expanding tiger range.

## REPORTS AND INDICES

### Global Military Spending in 2023

- ❖ The latest report was released by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).
- ❖ With the military expenditure worth \$83.6 billion in 2023, India was the fourth largest spender globally in 2023.
- ❖ Indian spending was up by 4.2 per cent from 2022 and by 44 per cent from 2014.

- ❖ The United States, China and Russia remained the top three military spenders globally followed by India and Saudi Arabia.
- ❖ Ukraine became the eighth largest military spender in 2023, increasing its spending by 51%.



## PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

### 2024 Ocean Decade Conference



- ❖ The 2024 Ocean Decade Conference was held in Barcelona, Spain.
- ❖ It was organized by the Spanish government and UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.



- ❖ It is aimed at assess progress toward the goals of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and foster collaboration among stakeholders.
- ❖ Theme of the event was “Delivering the science we need for the ocean we want.”
- ❖ During the event, India advocated for the establishment of a region-specific ocean observation centre.
- ❖ It also called for people-centred multi-hazard early warning systems and designing adaptation planning strategies to increase coastal resilience.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### **Ayushman Bharat Diwas 2024 - April 30**



- ❖ The Ayushman Bharat scheme by the Government of India on April 30, 2018.
- ❖ The Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna or PM-JAY is a key component of Ayushman Bharat Yojna
- ❖ PM-JAY was launched on 23rd September, 2018.
- ❖ It aims to provide healthcare benefits to crores of Indians who can't afford proper medical facilities.
- ❖ It is the largest health scheme in the world.
- ❖ It provides a health cover of ₹ 5 lakh per family per year to over 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable families.

