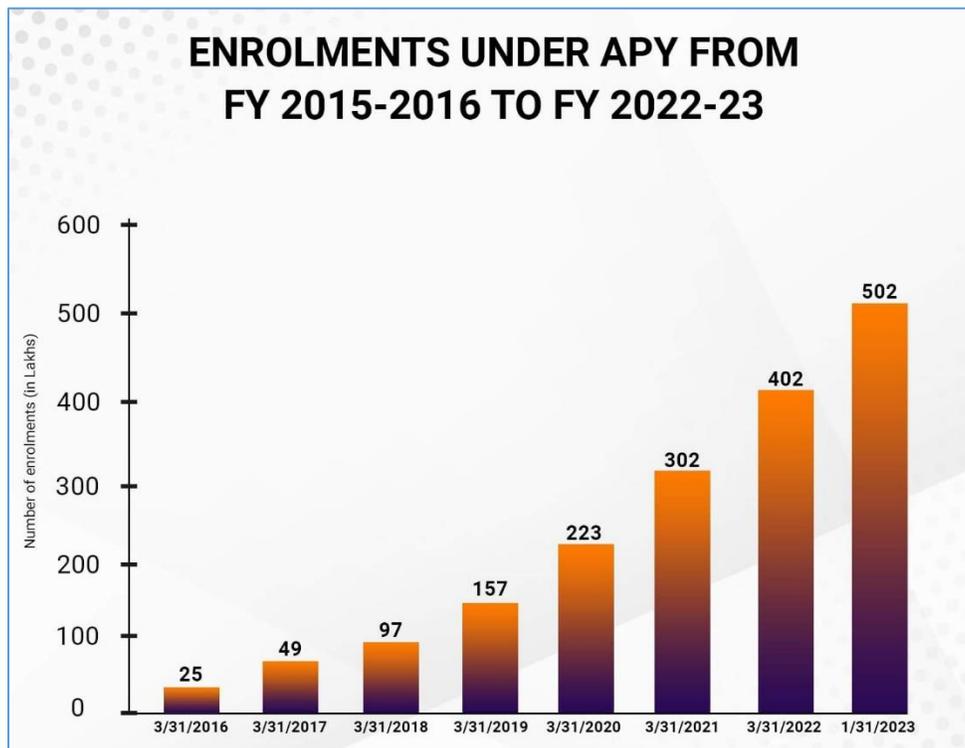


February - 07

NATIONAL

5 crore Enrollments on APY

- ❖ Atal Pension Yojana (APY) has recently crossed the landmark of 5 crore enrolments.
- ❖ APY is the flagship social security scheme of the Government of India was launched on 9th May 2015.
- ❖ The Government of India sets yearly targets for the banks under the Atal Pension Yojana.
- ❖ In 2022, 29 banks achieved the target.
- ❖ It aims to provide old age income security to the people working in the unorganised sectors.
- ❖ From 1st October of 2022 any income tax payer is not permitted to open new APY account.



Microsoft's Project ELLORA

- ❖ To bring 'rare' Indian languages online, Microsoft launched project ELLORA or Enabling Low Resource Languages in 2015.

- ❖ Under the project, researchers are building digital resources of the languages.
- ❖ Microsoft's Project ELLORA is helping small languages like Gondi, Mundari become eloquent for the digital world.
- ❖ The researchers are mapping out resources, including printed literature, to create a dataset to train their AI model.
- ❖ There are around 1.2 billion people, which is 20% of the world's population, can't use their language to navigate the digital world.



INTERNATIONAL

Country Partner for BioAsia 2023



- ❖ The Union Government, and several other international organizations organize the BIO ASIA forum in the Genome Valley, Hyderabad.
- ❖ The United Kingdom has been named Country Partner for BioAsia 2023.

- ❖ The forum is an opportunistic platform for biotech leaders to learn about the latest technological advancements in the field.
- ❖ This year, the forum is to focus on the MSME sector.

China dam near Indian border

- ❖ China is constructing a new dam on the Mabja Zangbo river in Tibet, close to the India, China and Nepal tri-junction.
- ❖ The new dam is located around 16 km north of the tri-junction and is opposite the Kalapani area of Uttarakhand.
- ❖ Mabja Zangbo originates in Nagari county of Tibet.
- ❖ It flows through Nepal into the Ghaghara River before joining the Ganga in India.



Representative to fight Islamophobia



- ❖ Canada appointed its first special representative on combatting Islamophobia.

- ❖ This position created following several recent attacks on Muslims in the country.
- ❖ Journalist and activist Amira Elghawaby will fill the post to "serve as a champion, advisor, expert and representative.
- ❖ She will support and enhance the federal government's efforts in the fight against Islamophobia, systemic racism, racial discrimination and religious intolerance.

Remove British Monarchy from Banknotes

- ❖ Australia has announced that its new \$5 notes will not feature an image of King Charles III.
- ❖ Its new \$5 bill would feature an Indigenous design rather than an image of King Charles III.
- ❖ But the king is still expected to appear on coins that currently bear the image of the late Queen Elizabeth II.
- ❖ The move would honour “the culture and history of the First Australians.”
- ❖ The British monarch remains Australia’s head of state, although these days that role is largely symbolic.



Uganda’s First Oil Drilling Program

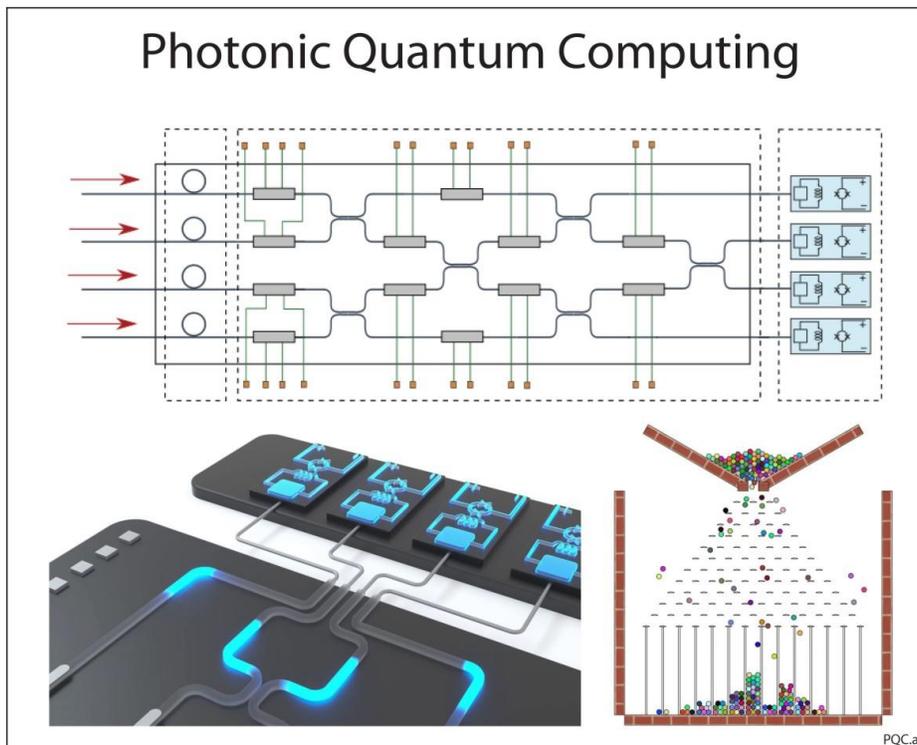
- ❖ Uganda launched the drilling of its first oil well.
- ❖ It is a key milestone as the country races to meet its target of first oil output in 2025.
- ❖ This site is operated by China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC) near Lake Albert in Kikuube district.
- ❖ The development comes 17 years after the discovery of commercial oil deposits in the east African country.

- ❖ Uganda's reserves are estimated 6.5 billion barrels of crude, of which about 1.4 billion are considered recoverable.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

World's First Photonic-based Quantum Computer

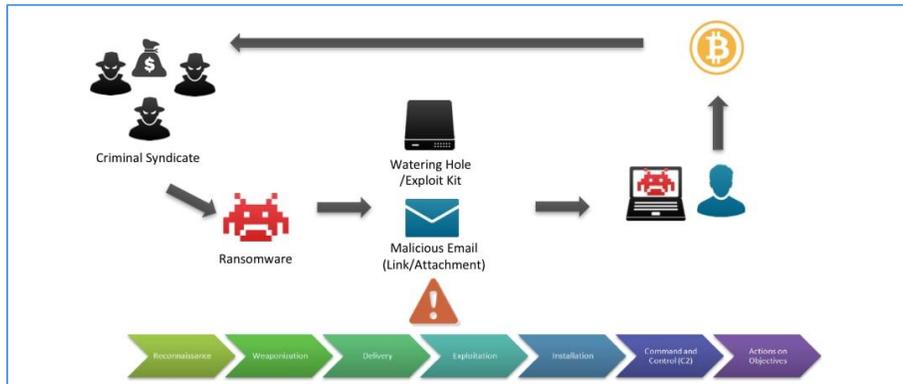


- ❖ Canada announced a new federal investment to build and commercialise the world's first photonic-based, fault-tolerant quantum computer.

- ❖ They will develop the quantum computer which will have the potential to provide world leading capabilities to help solve complex data problems.
- ❖ It could be used in a variety of sectors such as finance, transportation, environmental modelling, and health.

Major ransomware network Hive

- ❖ The United States has seized the website of a major ransomware network, Hive.
- ❖ It is an international ransomware network responsible for extorting and attempting to extort hundreds of millions of dollars from victims.
- ❖ Victims included India's Tata Power, German retail giant Media Markt, Costa Rica's public health service, etc.
- ❖ Hive functioned as a ransomware service.
- ❖ It let anybody use its software and other services to break into, lock down, and accept payments for a target's IT systems.



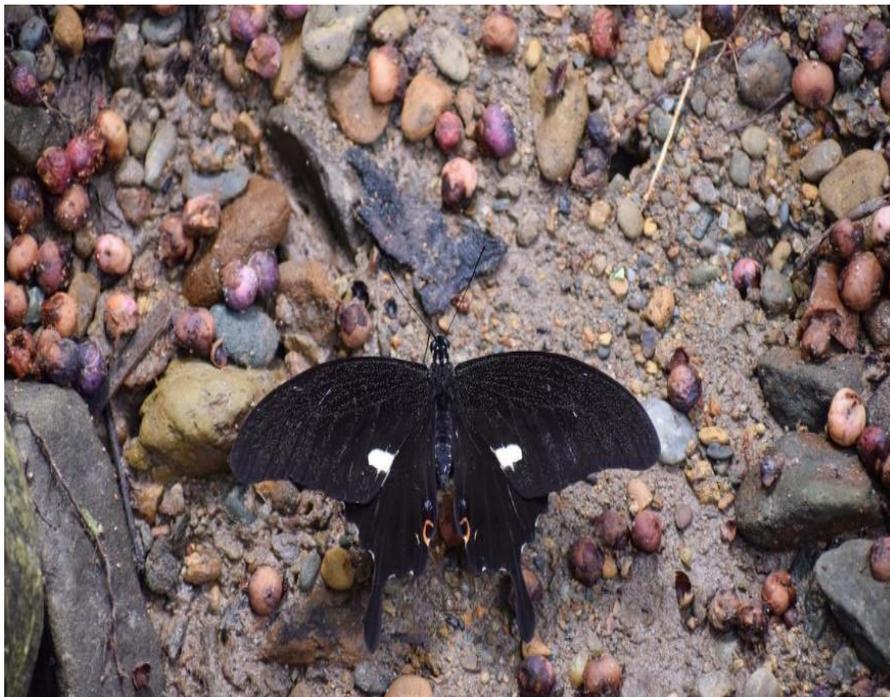
New plateau in Maharashtra



- ❖ Researchers have discovered a rare low-altitude basalt plateau in the Western Ghats that could offer new insights into surviving climate change.
- ❖ The plateau has a widespread flora with 76 species of plants and shrubs from 24 different families discovered so far.
- ❖ The plateau was discovered in Manjare village of Maharashtra's Thane district and is the fourth type of plateau to be identified in the region.
- ❖ The previous three are laterites at high and low altitudes and basalt at high altitudes.

ENVIRONMENT

New Swallowtail Butterfly



- ❖ A swallowtail butterfly, Noble's Helen (*Papilio noblei*) is disappearing from its previously known ranges from Myanmar and southern China to Vietnam.
- ❖ Now it has been recorded for the first time in Namdapha National Park of Arunachal Pradesh, India.
- ❖ The Noble's Helen, closest to the *Papilio antonio* from the Philippines, is characterised by a much large dorsal white spot.
- ❖ It was once common in the montane forest at moderate elevations in northern Thailand.

- ❖ Butterflies are considered vital indicators representing the state of biodiversity and key ecosystem functions.

STATES

Punjab Policy on Groundwater Usage

- ❖ The Punjab Water Regulation and Development Authority (PWRDA) has notified Punjab Groundwater Extraction and Conservation Directions, 2023.
- ❖ The Punjab government will start levying charges for extracting groundwater from the state on all non-exempted users from February 1.
- ❖ The new directions, however, do not cover groundwater use for agriculture, drinking and domestic purposes.
- ❖ An exemption has also been provided for all users who extract groundwater less than 300 cubic metres per month.
- ❖ The blocks of Punjab have been categorised into three zones (green, yellow and orange) based on the extent of annual groundwater extraction.

