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16th and 17th April 2023

INTERNATIONAL

1) International Big Cats Alliance

- Nepal has become a founding member of the International Big Cats Alliance. During the launch of the alliance under India's initiative, Minister for Energy Shakti Bahadur Basnet handed over the letter mentioning Nepal will be associated with the alliance as a founding member to Indian Minister for Forest and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav.

2) 132 km Tica-Buzi-Nova-Sofala Road project

- Dr Jaishankar inaugurated the Buzi Bridge virtually, which is a part of the 132 km Tica-Buzi-Nova-Sofala Road project. The bridge has been constructed by India and is a symbol of the solidarity and friendship between India and Mozambique.
- According to the Indian High Commission in Mozambique, the bridge will make a difference to the lives of many people in Mozambique. The Buzi Bridge is an essential project that demonstrates India's commitment to the development of Mozambique's infrastructure.
- India has been a reliable partner in Mozambique's growth journey, and this bridge is another instance of India's contribution to the country's progress.

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3) India and the United States

- According to provisional data from the commerce ministry, the bilateral trade between India and the United States has risen by 7.65% to reach \$128.55 billion in the fiscal year 2022-23, making the United States India's largest trading partner.
- This represents an increase from \$119.5 billion in the previous year and \$80.51 billion in 2020-21, indicating a growing economic relationship between the two countries.
- As per the data, exports from India to the United States increased by 2.81% to \$78.31 billion in the fiscal year 2022-23, compared to \$76.18 billion in 2021-22, while imports from the US surged by around 16% to \$50.24 billion.



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NATIONAL

1) Brand Finance, a U.K.-based brand valuation consultancy

- According to a recent report by Brand Finance, a U.K.-based brand valuation consultancy, MRF Ltd. has been ranked as the second-strongest tyre brand in the world.
- The report evaluated various parameters, and MRF scored high on most of them, including being the second fastest-growing tyre brand globally. With a score of 83.2 out of 100, MRF received a AAA- brand rating.
- The report also mentioned MRF as the most valuable Indian tyre brand and the only Indian tyre manufacturer in the top 10. Furthermore, MRF performed well in the Sustainability Perception Value category.

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2) India's International Aviation Safety Assessment

- India's International Aviation Safety Assessment rating has been reaffirmed as Category One, indicating that the country satisfies global standards for aviation safety oversight.
- The Federal Aviation Administration of the United States conducted an audit of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation in the domains of aircraft operations, airworthiness, and personnel licensing, following which India was granted Category One status.

3) Gross direct tax collections

- The Finance Ministry has released time series data indicating a significant increase in net direct tax collections, which rose by 160% to reach Rs 16,61,428 crore in 2022-23 from Rs 6,38,596 crore in 2013-14.
- Gross direct tax collections also saw a massive increase of 173% to Rs 19,68,780 crore in 2022-23 from Rs 7,21,604 crore in 2013-14.

4) State Bank of India



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- State Bank of India (SBI), India's largest lender by assets, has announced the re-introduction of its retail term deposit scheme, Amrit Kalash.
- The scheme offers a special tenor of 400 days and provides an interest rate of 7.6% for senior citizens and 7.1% for others.
- This deposit scheme had previously been launched by SBI on February 15, 2023, and was valid till March 31, 2023. The reintroduction of this scheme provides customers with another opportunity to avail themselves of the attractive interest rates offered by SBI.

5) European Space Agency

- The European Space Agency (ESA) launched the Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer mission (Juice) on Friday, 14 April, at 8:14 a.m. ET using an Ariane 5 rocket from Europe's spaceport in Kourou, French Guiana.
- Juice aims to explore Jupiter and three of its largest moons. Following a successful separation from the Ariane 5 rocket, the ESA received a signal from Juice about an hour after launch, confirming that communication between the vehicle and Earth-based mission control is established.

6) SpaceX, founded by Elon Musk

- SpaceX, founded by Elon Musk, is preparing to conduct an unprecedented test flight of its groundbreaking Starship, which is currently the most powerful rocket in existence.
- Ahead of the launch, Elon Musk has set modest expectations. SpaceX is conducting a demonstration flight of its Starship rocket.
- This is the first time that both the Super Heavy first-stage rocket booster and the six-engine spacecraft will fly together.

7) Commonwealth Finance Ministers High-Level Working Group Meeting

- During the Commonwealth Finance Ministers High-Level Working Group Meeting held in Washington D.C., finance ministers from several Commonwealth nations have urged for a comprehensive overhaul of the global financial architecture to improve the availability of development financing for countries that are vulnerable.



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8) India Meteorological Department

- The India Meteorological Department has announced that several states in the country, including Maharashtra, Bihar, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, and Delhi-NCR, are currently experiencing heatwave conditions.

- According to the IMD, these conditions are likely to persist for the next few days. The weather agency has also predicted that Punjab and Haryana may experience a rise in temperatures over the next two days, with the situation expected to improve thereafter.

STATE NEWS

1) Guinness Book of World Records

- Assam made a historic achievement by entering the Guinness Book of World Records with over 11,000 dancers and drummers performing the traditional 'Bihu' dance and playing the 'dhol' at a single venue.

- The performers, comprising both dancers and drummers, participated in the event at Sarusajai Stadium in Guwahati as part of the State Government's initiative to set a new world record in the Guinness Book.



SPORTS

1) Punjab Kings and Gujarat Titans at IS Bindra Stadium, Kagiso Rabada

- During a match between Punjab Kings and Gujarat Titans at IS Bindra Stadium, Kagiso Rabada achieved a significant milestone by taking his 100th wicket in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

- He became the fastest bowler to reach this milestone in terms of matches played, completing it in his 64th IPL match. Rabada, who is a right-arm pacer, surpassed Lasith Malinga, who reached the 100-wicket mark in his 70th match. The wicket that led to Rabada's achievement was that of Wriddhiman Saha.

2) Aman Sehrawat

- Aman Sehrawat, a freestyle wrestler, won India's 1st gold medal, under the men's 57kg freestyle category, at the Asian Wrestling Championships 2023.

- 36th edition of Asian Wrestling Championships was held in Astana, Kazakhstan, from 9 April to 14 April 2023.

- Aman Sehrawat won the gold medal by defeating Kyrgyzstan's Almaz Smanbekov (9-4), who won the bronze medal in 2022. India has won 14 medals (one gold, three silvers and 10 bronze) and is ranked 7th in overall medal tally. Kazakhstan was topped in medal tally followed by Japan and Iran.



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AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

1) National Panchayat Awards

- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is celebrates National Panchayat Awards Week from 17th to 21st April, 2023, as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) 2.0, leading up to National Panchayati Raj Day on 24th April, 2023.

- In order to commemorate this occasion in a meaningful manner and to align with the AKAM 2.0 guidelines of taking a “whole-of-society” and “whole-of-government” approach, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has developed a series of Thematic Conferences centered around the theme “Panchayaton ke Sankalpon ki Siddhi ka Utsav” to increase the reach of AKAM 2.0 and positively impact the lives of all Indians.

2) Nandini Gupta from Rajasthan

- Nandini Gupta from Rajasthan has been crowned Femina Miss India World 2023 in a grand ceremony held recently, making her the winner of the 59th edition of the beauty pageant.

- The first runner-up was Shreya Poonja from Delhi, and the second runner-up was Thounaojam Strela Luwang from Manipur.

- The event featured dazzling performances by Kartik Aaryan, Ananya Panday, and was hosted by Manish Paul and Bhumi Pednaker. Nandini will represent India at the 71st Miss World pageant, which will take place in the United Arab Emirates.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1) World Hemophilia Day

- World Hemophilia Day is celebrated every year on April 17th to honor the birth anniversary of Frank Schnabel, who established the World Federation of Hemophilia.

- The purpose of this day is to raise awareness and provide information about hemophilia and other bleeding disorders. Hemophilia is a rare medical condition where the blood fails to clot correctly due to the lack of specific clotting factors.

- This leads to prolonged bleeding, which can be hazardous and life-threatening in some situations.

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