

International

Tonga government elects 'Aisake Valu Eke as new prime minister



About News:-

- ❖ Tonga's government elected a new leader on Tuesday, two weeks after the previous premier resigned abruptly after a power struggle with the Pacific nation's royal family.
- ❖ Veteran politician 'Aisake Valu Eke was voted prime minister by secret ballot in parliament, securing 16 votes to his opponent Viliami Latu's eight.

Key Points:-

- ❖ Eke was first elected to parliament in 2010 and served as finance minister between 2014 and 2017. Former prime minister Siaosi Sovaleni resigned two weeks ago after butting heads with Tonga's influential King Tupou VI, fuelling speculation of a deepening rift between the monarch and his government.
- ❖ Oxford-educated Sovaleni, prime minister from 2021, resigned just hours before facing a vote of no confidence led by Eke.
- ❖ Eke, sworn in officially in February, will lead Tonga into the next general elections scheduled for November 2025.

About Tonga

- ❖ Capital: Nuku'alofa
- ❖ Currency: Paanga
- ❖ Head of State : King Tupou VI

National

PM Modi to lay foundation stone of Ken-Betwa river link project on December 25



About News:-

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Wednesday (December 25, 2024) lay the foundation stone of the Ken-Betwa river linking project, the first such initiative under the national river interlinking policy, at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ CM Yadav also highlighted that the Ken-Betwa link project was a unique example of cooperation and coordination between the Central Govt, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh.

Key Points:-

- ❖ PM Modi took the initiative to realise former Prime Minister Bharat Ratna Late Atal Bihari Vajpayee's dream of the river linking campaign.
- ❖ The CM said that the Ken-Betwa Link National Project is the largest irrigation project in the country adopts an underground pressurised pipe irrigation system. This project is being constructed on the Ken River in the Chhatarpur and Panna districts of Madhya Pradesh.
- ❖ Under the project, a 77-meter high and 2.13-kilometre long Daudhan Dam and 2 tunnels (upper level 1.9 km and lower level 1.1 km) will be constructed on the Ken River in Panna Tiger Reserve, and 2,853 - million cubic meters of water will be stored in the dam.
- ❖ The surplus water of the Ken River will be transferred to the Betwa River through the 221 km long link canal from the Daudhan Dam on the Ken River, providing irrigation and drinking water facilities in both states.

- ❖ Through a pressurised micro irrigation system from the project, an 8.11 lakh hectare area can be irrigated in 2 thousand villages of 10 districts, including Panna, Damoh, Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh, Niwari, Sagar, Raisen, Vidisha, Shivpuri, and Datia. About 7 lakh farmer families will benefit from the project.
- ❖ The project will provide drinking water to a 44 lakh population of Madhya Pradesh and a 21 lakh population of Uttar Pradesh. Besides, the project will generate 103 MW of hydropower and 27 MW of solar energy. Madhya Pradesh will get its full benefit, it added.
- ❖ The project also includes the work of saving the historical Chandela-era heritage ponds. By repairing/renovating 42 ponds of the Chandel era in Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh, and Niwari districts of Madhya Pradesh, water can be stored during the rainy season, which will benefit the rural areas and increase the groundwater level.

State

Centre Releases XV Finance Commission Grants: ₹614 Cr for Rajasthan, ₹455 Cr for Odisha



About News:-

- ❖ The Union Government has released the Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC) Grants during the Financial Year 2024–25, for Rural Local Bodies in Rajasthan and Odisha.
- ❖ For Rajasthan, 2nd installment of Untied Grants of the Financial Year 2024–25 amounting to Rs.560.63 crore along with the withheld amount of 1st installment of Untied Grants for Financial Year 2024–25 amounting to Rs.53.4123 crore has been released.

Key Points:-

- ❖ These funds are for 10105 eligible Gram Panchayats, 315 eligible Block Panchayats, and 20 eligible District Panchayats of the State.
- ❖ While for Rural Local Bodies in Odisha, 2nd installment of Untied Grants of the Financial Year 2024–25 amounting to Rs.370.20 crore along with the withheld amount of 1st installment of Untied Grants for Financial Year 2024–25 amounting to Rs.84.5086 crore has been released. These funds are for all eligible 6794 Gram Panchayats, 314 Block Panchayats, and 30 District Panchayats of the State.
- ❖ The government of India through the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the Ministry of Jal Shakti (Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation) recommends the release of Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC) Grants to States for Rural Local Bodies which are then released by the Ministry of Finance. The allocated Grants are recommended and released in 2 installments in a Financial Year.
- ❖ The Fifteenth Finance Commission Grants provided to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) / Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) play a crucial role in strengthening grassroots democracy. This financial support is improving rural local governance, enhancing accountability, and promoting self-reliance in villages.

Economic

EPFO Adds 13.41 Lakh Net Members during October 2024



About News:-

- ❖ The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has released provisional payroll data for October 2024, revealing a net addition of 13.41 lakh members.
- ❖ This signifies increased employment opportunities and heightened awareness of employee benefits, bolstered by EPFO's effective outreach initiatives.

Key highlights of the EPFO Payroll Data (October 2024) are as follows:

New Membership:

- ❖ EPFO enrolled around 7.50 lakh new members in October 2024.
- ❖ This addition in new memberships can be attributed to growing employment opportunities, increased awareness of employee benefits, and EPFO's successful outreach programs.

Group 18-25 Leads New Membership:

- ❖ A noticeable aspect of the data is the dominance of the 18-25 age group, constituting a significant 58.49% of the total new members added in October 2024.
- ❖ The net payroll data for the age group 18-25 for October 2024 is 5.43 lakhs. This agrees with the earlier trend which indicates that most individuals joining the organized workforce are youth, primarily first-time job seekers.

Rejoined Members:

- ❖ The payroll data highlights that approximately 12.90 lakh members exited and subsequently rejoined EPFO. This figure depicts year-over-year growth of 16.23% compared to October 2023.
- ❖ These members switched their jobs and rejoined the establishments covered under the ambit of EPFO and opted to transfer their accumulations instead of applying for final settlement thus, safeguarding long-term financial well-being and extending their social security protection.

State-wise Contribution:

- ❖ State-wise analysis of payroll data denotes that net member addition in the top five states/ UTs constitutes around 61.32% of net member addition, adding a total of around 8.22 lakh net members during the month. Of all the states, Maharashtra is leading by adding 22.18% of net members during the month.
- ❖ The states/UTs of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Haryana, Telangana, and Gujarat individually added more than 5% of the total net members during the month.

Appointment

President appoints new Governors for five states



About News:-

The President of India has appointed Governors for five states, as announced by the Rashtrapati Bhavan in a press communique on Tuesday.

Key Points:-

- ❖ Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati, who currently holds the position of Governor of Mizoram, has been appointed as the Governor of Odisha.
- ❖ General (Dr.) Vijay Kumar Singh (Retd.) has been designated as the new Governor of Mizoram.
- ❖ Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, currently serving as the Governor of Bihar, will now assume the role of Governor of Kerala.
- ❖ Arif Mohammed Khan, the Governor of Kerala, has been assigned the position of Governor of Bihar.
- ❖ Former Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla has been appointed as the Governor of Manipur.

- ❖ The communique further stated that the appointments would take effect from the dates the appointees assume charge of their respective offices. It also mentioned that the resignation of Odisha's outgoing Governor, Raghubar Das, has been accepted by the President.

Science & Technology

New Consumer Protection Apps Launched on National Consumer Day 2024



About News:-

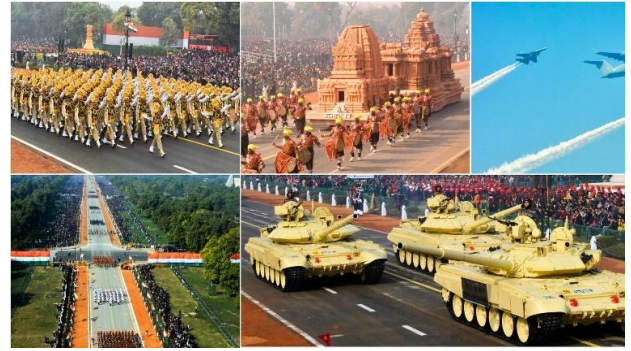
- ❖ Department of Consumer Affairs to launch the 'Jago Grahak Jago App,' 'Jagruti App,' and 'Jagruti Dashboard' on 24th December 2024 on National Consumer Day 2024 to protect Consumers from Dark Patterns.
- ❖ The Apps would considerably enhance the capability of the CCPA in taking suo moto action against dark patterns.
- ❖ CCPA had earlier taken suo moto cognizance of Dark Patterns adopted by e-commerce platforms. E-commerce platforms take corrective action after CCPA Intervention.

Key Points:-

- ❖ create a transparent and fair digital marketplace where consumers can make informed decisions without being tricked or coerced;
- ❖ educate consumers about their rights;
- ❖ regulate e-commerce platforms to prevent practices such as subscription traps, where consumers are unknowingly signed up for recurring payments, or misleading product offers.
- ❖ Encourage companies to adopt ethical design practices that prioritize consumer rights and transparency.

Miscellaneous

15 states & 11 ministries to showcase tableaux at Republic Day 2025



About News:-

The Ministry of Defence on Monday announced that the theme for the Republic Day 2025 tableaux is "Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas" (Golden India: Heritage and Development).

Key Points:-

- ❖ This annual display on Kartavya Path features creative and cultural exhibits from states, Union Territories, and central ministries.
- ❖ Due to time constraints in the Republic Day Parade, only 15 states and Union Territories Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal were selected.
- ❖ Additionally, 11 ministries and departments of the Union government will showcase their tableaux during the parade. States and UTs not selected for Kartavya Path can present their displays at Bharat Parv, held at Red Fort from January 26 to 31, 2025.

Sport

M Raghu and Devika Sihag win the men's and women's singles titles at the Senior Nationals



About News:-

- ❖ Karnataka's M Raghu saved three match points in the decider to defeat former

champion Mithun Manjunath and clinch the men's singles title, while Haryana's Devika Sihag ended the giant-killing run of Shriyanshi Valishetty to win the women's singles crown at the Yonex- Sunrise 86th Senior Nationals badminton championships.

- ❖ The 86th Senior National Badminton Championships was organised by the Badminton Association of India and hosted by Karnataka Badminton Association in Bengaluru, Karnataka from 20-24 December 2024.

Key Points:-

- ❖ Raghu, who had upset top seed Sathish Kumar in the semi-finals, triumphed over Mithun 14-21, 21-14, 24-22 in just under an hour to secure his maiden national title, while Devika defeated Shriyanshi 21-15, 21-16.
- ❖ Junior National Champions Arsh Mohammad and Sanskar Saraswat added the senior nationals title to their collection by upsetting top seeds Naveen P and Lokesh V 12-21, 21-12, 19-21 in the men's doubles final.
- ❖ Ayush Agarwal and Shruti Mishra claimed the mixed doubles crown, while Arathi Sara Sunil and Varshini VS won the women's doubles final. The men's singles final provided the grand finale to the senior nationals at the Karnataka Badminton Association courts, as two players from the state faced off.
- ❖ Mithun, who won the title two editions ago, started strong, clinching the opening game with ease.
- ❖ Raghu forced a decider by racing through the second game. His control during the net exchanges made the difference as he fought back from 15-19 to level the score at 19-19. Although Mithun earned three match points, he was unable to convert any of them.
- ❖ In the women's singles final, Devika quickly took control of the match tempo and maintained her dominance to win in straight games.

Important Day

Good Governance Week to be conducted on 19.12.2024 - 24.12.2024



About News:-

- ❖ As part of the Good Governance Week activities, 2024, the Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore, the Nationwide campaign for Redressal of Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery will be held in all Districts, States, and Union Territories of India from 19th – 24th December, 2024.
- ❖ The Hon'ble Prime Minister in his Message on Good Governance Week has stated that, "What is most heartening to note is that the 'Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore' campaign continues to be a key element of Good Governance Week. 'Prashashan Gaon ki Ore' is not merely a slogan, but a transformational effort aimed at bringing effective Governance closer to rural people. This is a true essence of grassroots democracy, where development reaches the people".
- ❖ The campaign will be held in 700+ districts from 19.12.2024 to 24.12.2024. All Chief Secretaries, AR secretaries, and DCs/DMs of all States/UTs have been invited in the virtual launch function. Secretary, DARPG; Chief Secretary, Govt. of Maharashtra; Chief Secretary, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh; Chief Secretary, Govt. of Assam and Pr. Secretary, Administrative Reforms, Bihar will address the inaugural webinar to formally launch the campaign.

- ❖ More than 700 Districts across the nation will also organize workshops on Good Governance Practices and improvement of Service Delivery. The Prashashan Gaon ki Ore guidelines have been shared with all the Districts and States/UTs.
- ❖ The States/UTs will conduct the following activities during the Prashashn Gaon Ki Ore campaign between December 19th to 24th, 2024:
- ❖ Public Grievances Redressed in Special Camps
- ❖ Public grievances Redressed in CPGRAMS
- ❖ Public grievances Redressed in the State portals
- ❖ Service Delivery applications disposed
- ❖ Collation and dissemination of Good Governance practices
- ❖ Success stories on the resolution of public grievances

