

International

U.S. House passes bill banning transgender students from women's sports



About News:-

- ❖ The House of Representatives approved legislation on Tuesday aimed at restricting transgender athletes from competing in women's and girls' sports at educational institutions receiving federal funds.
- ❖ The measure passed largely along party lines with a 218 to 206 vote. Two Democrats, Henry Cuellar and Vicente Gonzalez, both from Texas, supported the bill.
- ❖ Representative Don Davis of North Carolina voted "present," while no Republicans opposed the measure.
- ❖ The legislation failed to advance in the Senate in 2023 when Democrats held the majority; Republicans now control it.

The bill:-

- ❖ The Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act aims to amend Title IX regulations.
- ❖ It defines sex strictly as "reproductive biology and genetics at birth."
- ❖ The bill effectively prohibits transgender athletes from participating in teams that align with their gender identity.
- ❖ The ban applies to all schools and institutions that receive federal funding.
- ❖ Transgender women are allowed to practice and train with women's or girls' teams under the bill.
- ❖ However, this is permitted only if no female athlete is deprived of opportunities as a result.

About United States:-

- ❖ Capital:- Washington, D.C.
- ❖ Currency:- U.S. dollar
- ❖ President:- Joe Biden

National

PM Modi set to inaugurate Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025

About News:-

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the 'Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025', the largest mobility expo in the country, on Friday at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.
- ❖ The Expo, to be held from January 17-22 across three separate venues Bharat Mandapam and Yashobhoomi in Delhi, and India Expo Center and Mart in Greater Noida will host over nine concurrent shows, over 20 conferences and pavilions.

Key Points:-

- ❖ The event this year will have a special emphasis on global significance with participation from across the globe as exhibitors and visitors.
- ❖ It is an industry-led and government-supported initiative and is being coordinated by the Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) of India with the joint support of various industry bodies and partner organizations.



- ❖ The automobile sales in the country surged by a robust 11.6 percent in 2024 to scale the highest-ever mark of 2.5 crore units compared to the corresponding figure of 2.3 crore units in the previous year, according to wholesale data by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM).

- ❖ With this, India remained the world's third-largest car market last year. The growth has been primarily driven by the two-wheeler segment which grew by 14.5 percent in 2024 as compared to the previous year, posting sales of 1.95 crore units. In addition, passenger vehicles and three-wheelers posted their highest-ever sales in a calendar year.
- ❖ In the October-December quarter, passenger vehicles, commercial vehicles, and three-wheelers posted their highest-ever growth, according to the SIAM data.

About Delhi:-

- ❖ Lt. Governor:- Vinai Kumar Saxena
- ❖ Chief Minister:- Atishi Marlena

State

Odisha announces monthly pension of Rs 20,000 for people imprisoned during Emergency

About News:-

- ❖ Odisha government on Monday announced a monthly pension of Rs 20,000 for people who were imprisoned during the Emergency of 1975, imposed by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.
- ❖ The pension scheme, effective from January 1, follows chief minister Mohan Charan Majhi's pledge on Independence Day to recognise them.

Key Points:-



- ❖ This decision allows Odisha to join several other states, including Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Assam, who have similar pension schemes in place for Emergency detainees.
- ❖ A Home Department resolution said the state govt will also cover all medical expenses for the Emergency detainees. Eligible persons have to apply for the pension and medical benefits.

- ❖ All those arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, Defence of India Rules (DIR), and The Defence and Internal Security of India Rules during the Emergency from June 25, 1975, to March 21, 1977, will be eligible to apply for the pension. Sources said more than 300 people in Odisha are eligible to apply, which would entail an annual expenditure of Rs 8 crore for the govt.
- ❖ Additionally, benefits from the person will be withdrawn if found to be involved in anti-national or criminal activities and punished by a court of law. Those claiming benefits by producing false documents will face prosecution. Money paid to them will be recovered with an annual 12% interest.
- ❖ The government constituted state-level and district-level committees to select the beneficiaries.

About Odisha

- ❖ Capital:- Bhubaneswar
- ❖ Governor:- Kambhampati Hari Babu
- ❖ Chief minister:- Mohan Charan Majhi (BJP)

Economic

8th Pay Commission for govt employees approved by Cabinet

About News:-

- ❖ Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Union Cabinet on Thursday approved the constitution of the 8th Pay Commission.



- ❖ I&B minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the Chairman and two members for the same will be appointed soon.

Key Points:-

- ❖ The Pay Commission decides the salary and compensation of central government employees, and with the 8th Pay Commission, they can look forward to a salary hike.

- ❖ Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the 7th Pay Commission, implemented in 2016 is valid till 2026. Ahead of that, the government has approved the constitution of the 8th Pay Commission so that recommendations are made on time and can be implemented from 2026 onwards.
- ❖ More than one crore central government employees and pensioners eagerly await the establishment of the 8th Pay Commission, which will review and revise their basic pay, allowances, pension, and additional benefits.
- ❖ Following this schedule, the 8th Pay Commission's recommendations would likely come into force from January 1, 2026. Similar to previous commissions, it is expected to bring revisions in salaries, including changes to Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR) for pensioners.
- ❖ **The 7th Pay Commission:-** which was established by then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on February 28, 2014, delivered its findings on November 19, 2015, with the changes taking effect from January 1, 2016.

Appointment

Shri Vineet Joshi assumes charge as Secretary, Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education

About News:-



- ❖ Shri Vineet Joshi assumed charge as Secretary, of the Department of Higher Education today in Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi.

Key Points:-

- ❖ Before this appointment, he served as the Chief Secretary of Manipur.
- ❖ He has held several prominent positions in the education sector, including Director General of the National Testing Agency (NTA), Chairman of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), and Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Education, among others.
- ❖ Shri Joshi holds a degree in Mechanical Engineering from IIT Kanpur and an MBA from the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade.

Science & Technology

Union cabinet approves establishment of third space launch pad at Sriharikota

About News:-

- ❖ The Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today approved the establishment of the Third Launch Pad (TLP) at Satish Dhawan Space Centre of ISRO at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- ❖ The Third Launch Pad project envisages the establishment of the launch infrastructure at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh for the Next Generation of Launch Vehicles of ISRO and also to support a standby launch pad for the Second Launch Pad at Sriharikota.
- ❖ This will also enhance the launch capacity for future Indian human spaceflight missions.



Key Points:-

- ❖ **Implementation strategy and targets:-** The TLP is designed to have a configuration that is as universal and adaptable as possible that can support not only NGLV but also the LVM3 vehicles with Semicryogenic stage as well as scaled-up configurations of NGLV.

- ❖ It will be realized with maximum industry participation fully utilizing ISRO's experience in establishing the earlier launch pads and maximally sharing the existing launch complex facilities.
- ❖ TLP is targeted to be established within 48 months or 4 years.
- ❖ **Expenditure involved:-** The total fund requirement is Rs. 3984.86 Crore and includes the establishment of the Launch Pad and the associated facilities.
- ❖ **Number of beneficiaries:-** The Project will boost the Indian Space ecosystem by enabling higher launch frequencies and the national capacity to undertake human spaceflight & space exploration missions.

Background:

- ❖ Indian Space Transportation Systems are completely reliant on two launch pads viz. First Launch Pad (FLP) & Second Launch Pad (SLP).
- ❖ FLP was realized 30 years ago for PSLV and continues to provide launch support for PSLV & SSLV. SLP was established primarily for GSLV & LVM3 and also functions as standby for PSLV.
- ❖ SLP has been operational for almost 20 years and has enhanced the launch capacity towards enabling some commercial missions of PSLV/LVM3 along with the national missions including the Chandrayaan-3 mission.
- ❖ SLP is also getting ready to launch the human-rated LVM3 for the Gaganyaan missions.
- ❖ The expanded vision of the Indian Space Programme during the Amrit Kaal including the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS) by 2035 & an Indian Crewed Lunar Landing by 2040 requires a new generation of heavier launch vehicles with new propulsion systems, which cannot be met by the existing launch pads.
- ❖ The expeditious establishment of a Third Launch Pad to cater to a heavier class of Next Generation Launch Vehicles and as a standby for SLP is highly essential to meet the evolving space transportation requirements for another 25-30 years.

Defence

Indian Navy Celebrates 'Year of Naval Civilians'

About News:-



- ❖ The Indian Navy is proudly celebrating the 'Year of Naval Civilians' on 17 Jan 25 at Dr DS Kothari Auditorium, DRDO Bhawan, New Delhi. The event will be graced by Hon'ble Raksha Mantri as the Chief Guest.

Key Points:-

- ❖ The ceremony will showcase the remarkable achievements and contributions of Naval Civilians through an inspiring agenda including a curated exhibition featuring photographs and paintings highlighting the work, lives, and stories of Naval Civilians.
- ❖ This will offer a glimpse into their pivotal roles and achievements in various facets of Naval support operations.
- ❖ The Chief Guest will be introduced to recipients of the Prime Minister's Shram Awards who have demonstrated exceptional skills, dedication, and innovation in their respective fields.
- ❖ An exclusive Naval Civilians Song 'Jee Jaan Lagan Se' has been composed. The beauty of this song lies in the fact that the lyricist, music composer, and singers are all Naval Civilian employees.
- ❖ The instruments have been played by musicians of the Naval Central Band. The entire team has been mentored by Cdr Satish Champion, Director of Music (Navy).
- ❖ This is a remarkable example of the seamless integration of Naval Civilians with Uniformed Service.
- ❖ The song would be performed live by all the Singers during the celebration of the 'Year of Naval Civilians'.

Award

Singapore confers Honorary Citizen Award on former CII head Tarun Das

About News:-

- ❖ Singapore has awarded Tarun Das, former Director General of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the Honorary Citizen Award for his invaluable contributions to Singapore and Singapore-India relations.
- ❖ President Tharman Shanmugaratnam conferred the award upon Das at a ceremony held in New Delhi on Wednesday.



About Tarun Das:-

- ❖ Tarun Das has made significant contributions to the development of Singapore-India relations over several decades. As one of Singapore's strongest advocates in India, Das first led a delegation of Indian industrialists to Singapore in 1993 as part of India's "Look East" policy.
- ❖ He spearheaded many important initiatives such as the annual CII Core Group visits to Singapore and the India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue. Das' efforts to facilitate dialogue and engagement have contributed to the strong and substantive economic and people-to-people ties between the two countries.
- ❖ Tarun Das is the former Director General and Chief Mentor of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), where he served for over 40 years. He is the Founding Trustee of the Ananta Centre and Ananta Aspen Centre, Director of the Singapore-India Partnership Foundation (SIPF), and a Member of the India-Singapore Strategic Dialogue (ISSD).
- ❖ Das played a significant role in the establishment of the annual ISSD. The ISSD, which held its 15th edition in August 2024, is a key platform that brings together business leaders, policymakers, and academia to facilitate discussions on strengthening Singapore-India cooperation.
- ❖ He Das also sought to broaden relations between our two countries beyond trade and economics, by fostering closer people-to-people ties.

- ❖ As Director of the SIPF, Das led efforts to strengthen youth and academic exchanges and private-sector collaboration. This includes the inaugural SIPF Students Immersion Programme to India in 2023 involving students from the Singapore University of Social Sciences.
- ❖ Previously, Das was awarded the Singapore Public Service Medal in 2004 for his efforts and contributions to strengthening Singapore-India relations.

About Award:-

- ❖ The Honorary Citizenship Award is the highest form of recognition bestowed by the Singapore Government for outstanding contributions by a non-Singaporean to the country's growth and development.
- ❖ It is conferred on those who have made a significant impact in the areas of business, science and technology, information communications, education, health, arts and culture, sports, tourism, community services, or security.
- ❖ The title of Honorary Citizen is a national award conferred by the Singapore Government since 2003 to recognise and acknowledge the contributions of non-Singaporeans who have rendered extensive and valuable services to Singapore and its people, or who have made a significant impact in the areas of business, science and technology, information communications, education, health, arts and culture, sports, tourism, and community services or security.
- ❖ The Honorary Citizen Award is the highest form of national recognition for a non-Singaporean.

Sport

India's Arjun Erigaisi defeats Magnus Carlsen, and Fabiano Caruana to win an online chess event

About News:-



- ❖ Indian grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi on Tuesday won the early Titled Tuesday weekly blitz competition conducted by Chess.com, reported First Post, beating the World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen and World No. 2 Fabiano Caruana.
- ❖ According to the report, the 21-year-old finished with 10 points from 11 rounds. He defeated Magnus Carlsen with black pieces in round 10, before beating Fabiano Caruana in the 11th and final round.
- ❖ Earlier in round seven, Arjun Erigaisi lost only one match to American grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura. Erigaisi is the fourth-ranked player in the world, while Nakamura is the third in FIDE classical ratings.

About Arjun Erigaisi:

- ❖ Born into a Telugu family in Telangana's Warangal, Arjun Erigaisi studied chess at the BS Chess Academy in Hanamkonda.
- ❖ Until December 2021, Erigaisi was studying data science before deciding to drop out of college during the first year to focus on his chess career.

- ❖ Career-wise, Arjun won a silver medal in the 2015 Asian Youth Championship in Korea. Later in 2021, he became the first Indian to qualify for the Goldmoney Asian Rapid of the Champions Chess Tour 2021.
- ❖ In January 2022, Arjun won the Tata Steel Chess 2022 Challengers and was crowned the Indian National Champion by winning the 58th MPL National Championship of India 2022 in March.
- ❖ Following this, Arjun Arjun won the 28th Abu Dhabi International Chess Festival in August and the Tata Steel Chess India 2022 Blitz in December.
- ❖ Arjun had a successful 2024. He won the Menorca Open A on a superior tie-break in April, the Stepan Avagyan Memorial 2024 in June, and the 2024 WR Chess Masters Cup in London in October.

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