

**21 August 2024**

*New AI platform will connect farmers and scientists over phone, aid in pest control*



### **Key Points:**

- ❖ The Union Government has launched the AI-based National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS) that will help farmers to connect with agriculture scientists and experts on controlling pests using their phones.
- ❖ NPSS aims to reduce the dependence of farmers on pesticide retailers, and inculcate a scientific approach among them towards pest management.
- ❖ NPSS will analyse the latest data on pests using AI tools to help farmers and experts in pest control and management.
- ❖ NPSS will help about 14 crore farmers in the country. The Centre envisages connecting scientists with the fields using the platform.
- ❖ Farmers can take photos of the infested crops or the insect using the NPSS platform and these will reach scientists and experts. This system cures the diseases at the proper time using technology. It will help in

*accurate diagnosis and accurate treatment.*

- ❖ This will build confidence among farmers and production will also increase. It will save the soil too.

*Jal Shakti Minister launched version 2.0 of 'FloodWatch India' app to enhance flood monitoring*



### **Key Points:**

- ❖ Union Minister for Jal Shakti C R Paatil unveiled version 2.0 of the 'FloodWatch India' mobile application, aimed at providing a more comprehensive and detailed overview of flood conditions across the country.
- ❖ The upgraded app, developed by the Central Water Commission (CWC), builds on its first version launched last year. The initial version offered flood forecasts from 200 monitoring stations.
- ❖ Version 2.0 significantly expands this scope, integrating real-time data from 592 flood monitoring stations across the country.
- ❖ This expansion aims to provide users with a more extensive and detailed flood condition overview.

- ❖ Additionally, Version 2.0 introduces realtime information on the storage positions of 150 major reservoirs, offering insights into potential flood scenarios in downstream areas. Users can check flood conditions at the nearest monitoring station directly from the home page.

**UP govt launched Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyam Vikas Yojana**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has launched the 'Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyam Vikas Abhiyan Yojana' to boost employment opportunities for the state's youth.
- ❖ The yojana was announced on the occasion of the 78th Independence Day celebration in the state capital, Lucknow.

**About Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyam Vikas Abhiyan Yojana**

- ❖ Under the Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyam Vikas Abhiyan Yojana, the state government will provide financial support to the state's young entrepreneurs.

- ❖ Under the Yojana, the state government has set a target of establishing 10 lakh new MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) in the state.
- ❖ The government hopes to create 50 lakh employment opportunities directly and indirectly through the Mukhyamantri Yuva Udyam Vikas Abhiyan Yojana

**70th National Film Awards winners announced**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ Actor Rishab Shetty won the Best Actor award in a Feature Film for his scintillating performance in the Kannada folk action thriller, Kantara.
- ❖ The film, which was also directed by Rishab, was also named Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment.
- ❖ The Best Actress in a Feature Film award was a tie between Nithya Menen, for her performance in the Tamil comedy-drama Thiruchitrambalam, and Manasi Parekh for her Gujarati drama film, Kutch Express.

### India & Israel join hands for new water technology centre at IIT Madras



#### Key Points:

- ❖ India and Israel have joined hands for the establishment of a new water technology centre at IIT-Madras, which is expected to serve as a “key contributor” to India’s efforts to achieve sustainable water supply for all.
- ❖ The Center of Water Technology aims to become a hub for innovation, research, and capacity-building in water technologies, particularly focusing on sustainable solutions for urban water supply.
- ❖ This tripartite agreement, signed by the Embassy of Israel, IIT Madras, and the AMRUT mission of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, reflects a shared commitment to address the critical challenges of water management in India.

### India shines at the 17th International Earth Sciences Olympiad



#### Key Points:

- ❖ The Indian student team has bagged multiple prestigious medals at the 17th edition of the International Earth Sciences Olympiad (IESO) held in Beijing, China.
- ❖ This year’s 17th IESO saw participation from 35 countries, with 32 advancing to the finals.
- ❖ The competitions were held across four categories: Theory and Practical, Earth Science Project, International Team Field Investigation, and Data Mining.
- ❖ The four-member Indian team, comprising students from Gujarat, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan, achieved remarkable success by winning three gold medals, three bronze medals, and two silver medals across three competition categories: Theory and Practical, Earth System Project, and International Team Field Investigation.
- ❖ **About International Earth Science Olympiad**
- ❖ The International Earth Science Olympiad stands out as one of the most successful student-centric

initiatives under the REACHOUT (Research, Education, Training, and Outreach) scheme of the Ministry of Earth Sciences.

- ❖ Established in 2003 during the International Geoscience Education Organization Council Meeting in Calgary, Canada, the IESO is an annual competition for secondary school students worldwide. It aims to foster awareness of earth sciences through teamwork, collaboration, the exchange of ideas, and competition.
- ❖ India has been participating in the IESO since 2007 and had the honor of hosting the 10th edition in Mysore.

**Govt cancels lateral entry hiring**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ THREE DAYS after it invited invitations for lateral entry posts in the bureaucracy, the government announced Tuesday that the advertisement was being withdrawn.
- ❖ The Opposition had slammed the move as another step by the Modi government to undermine reservations, with NDA allies also expressing their concern over it.

- ❖ Sources in the BJP admitted that the party did not want to risk the charge sticking – in a repeat of the recent Lok Sabha elections.
- ❖ In a letter to UPSC chairperson Preeti Sudan, Minister for Department of Personnel and Training Jitendra Singh underlined the Modi government's commitment to "social justice" while directing withdrawal of the advertisement inviting applications for 45 posts in the bureaucracy.

**India Agree to buy additional 251 MW of Power from Nepal**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ India has agreed to purchase an additional 251 MW of electricity from Nepal, bringing its total import to 941 MW.
- ❖ External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar announced the new electricity deal with Nepal after meeting the visiting Nepalese Foreign Minister, Dr Arzu Rana Deuba, in New Delhi on 19 August 2024.
- ❖ The Nepalese foreign minister, Dr Arzu Rana Deuba, is on a five-day

official visit to India from 18 to 22 August 2024. The Nepalese foreign minister's visit comes after the K P Sharma Oli government was sworn in in Nepal in July 2024.

- ❖ In a sign of improving ties between the two countries, Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Nepal on 11 and 12 August 2024, and the Nepalese Prime Minister attended the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit, hosted by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 17 August 2024.

#### Electricity Export from Nepal to India

- ❖ Nepal, blessed with abundant hydropower potential, became a net exporter of electricity last year.
- ❖ During Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Nepal in 2014, an IndiaNepal Power Trade Agreement was signed, which provided for the sale of Nepal's surplus electricity to India. In October 2021, India agreed to import 39 MW of power from Nepal for the first time.
- ❖ With the recently concluded deal in August 2024, India has agreed to import 941 MW of electricity from 28 hydel projects in Nepal.
- ❖ India has also signed a long-term energy deal with Nepal to import 10,000 MW of electricity in the next 10 years starting this year.

- ❖ Nepal also exports power to India by selling in the day-ahead market of the Indian Energy Exchange.

#### Current Import of Electricity from Nepal

- ❖ Currently, Nepal exports 620 MW of electricity through the 400 kV Dhalkebar-Muzaffarpur cross-border transmission line.
- ❖ Another 70 MW is being exported via the 132 kV MahendranagarTanakpur transmission line. The Nepal Electricity Authority has also entered into medium-term power sales agreements with state electricity boards in Haryana and Bihar.
- ❖ For the first time, Bihar has agreed to buy electricity from Nepal through a medium-term power sales agreement.

#### CM Sukhu launches 'Mukhyamantri Bal Paushtik Aahar Yojana' in HP



#### Key Points:

- ❖ Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu launched 'Mukhyamantri Bal Paushtik Aahar Yojana' to provide nutritious foods to schoolchildren and a scheme to provide free Tablets to primary school teachers to boost digitalisation in the state educational and administrative system.

- ❖ The scheme was launched by the chief minister Sukhu in Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh, on 17 August 2024.
- ❖ **Mukhyamantri Bal Poshtik Aahar Yojana**
- ❖ The Mukhyamantri Bal Poshtik Aahar Yojana is only for government school children. Students from nursery to class eight will be provided boiled eggs or fruits once a week.
- ❖ The fresh fruits will be sourced from local markets based on the preferences of the children, The scheme will complement the existing mid-day meal scheme and provide nutritious food to children in government schools.
- ❖ It will cover 15,181 government schools and 5,34,293 students in the state. The state government has allocated Rs.12.75 crore for the 'Mukhyamantri Bal Poshtik Aahar Yojana' for 2024-25.

#### Tablet scheme

- ❖ The state government will provide free tablets to 17,510 primary school teachers in the state. This is expected to boost digitisation in the educational and administrative system.
- ❖ According to the government, the distribution of tablets will modernise

teaching methods, improve access to digital educational resources, and simplify administrative tasks, such as recording attendance and updating data.

- ❖ By equipping teachers with these tools, overall quality would improve. Teachers can now access online training programmes through tablets, which will enhance their overall professional development.

#### Mukhyamantri Sukh Ashray Yojana

- ❖ The chief minister said that under the Mukhyamantri Sukh Ashray Yojana, the government has adopted 6,000 orphaned children.
- ❖ The scheme was launched by the Sukhu government in February 2023 to provide education, care, and support to the state's orphan children until they reach the age of 27

#### 3rd India Japan 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue held in New Delhi



#### Key Points:

- ❖ The 3rd India-Japan 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue of the Defence and Foreign Affairs Ministers of both countries was held in New Delhi on 20 August 2024.

- ❖ The 2+2 Dialogue is a mechanism for both countries to discuss bilateral, regional, and global issues of mutual importance.
- ❖ It was started in 2019 to deepen and enhance India and Japan's security and defence cooperation. India and Japan share close ties and will celebrate the 10th year of their Special Strategic and Global Partnership in 2024.

### India-Japan 2+2 Dialogue

- ❖ During the 13th India-Japan Annual Summit meeting in Japan in October 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe decided to start a 2+2 meeting of their foreign and Defence Ministers to deepen and institutionalise bilateral security and defence cooperation.
- ❖ The first India-Japan 2+2 dialogue was held in New Delhi in November 2019. The second India-Japan 2+2 dialogue was held in Tokyo, Japan, in September 2022.
- ❖ **3rd India Japan 2+2 Dialogue**
- ❖ Indian External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh hosted the 3rd India-Japan 2+2 Dialogue.

- ❖ The Japanese side was led by Defence Minister Kihara Minoru and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ms Yoko Kamikawa.
- ❖ During the talk, both sides reviewed the bilateral cooperation and explored new initiatives to further strengthen the engagements between the two countries.
- ❖ They also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. They agreed on an open Indo-Pacific region.
- ❖ Later, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had separate talks with the Japanese Defence Minister Kihara Minoru.

### India and 2+2 Dialogue

- ❖ India holds 2+2 Dialogues with the United States of America, Russia, Japan, Australia, and Brazil. With Brazil, India holds secretary-level talks, while with the other countries, it holds ministerial-level talks.
- ❖ **United States:** The United States was the first country with which India started the 2+2 Dialogue. The first India-US 2+2 Dialogue was held in September 2018 in New Delhi. The 5th India-United States 2+2 Dialogue was held in New Delhi in November 2023.

- ❖ Russia: The first India -Russia 2+2 Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 6 December 2021.
- ❖ Australia: The first India -Australia 2+2 Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 11 September 2021. The second Dialogue was held on 20 November 2023 in New Delhi, and the third will be held in 2025.
- ❖ Japan: First in 2019 in New Delhi, second in Tokyo in 2022 and third in 2024.
- ❖ Brazil: The first 2+2 Dialogue was held in New Delhi in March 2024. However, it was led by secretaries of the respective departments rather than Ministers.

**World's oldest person, Maria Branyas Morera, dies aged 117**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ Maria Branyas, world's oldest person, passed away at the age of 117 in a Spanish nursing home, as confirmed by her official X account on Tuesday.
- ❖ Guinness World Records (GWR) also issued a statement confirming that she passed away at the age of 117 years and 168 days. Born in San Francisco, California, in 1907, and after spending time in Texas and New

Orleans, the family returned to their native Spain in 1915 amid the First World War, which complicated their Atlantic voyage.

- ❖ Branyas, who experienced the 1918 flu pandemic, both World Wars, and Spain's civil war, contracted Covid-19 in 2020 shortly after her 113th birthday. Despite being confined to her room at the nursing home, she made a full recovery

**Kolkata rape and murder case**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ Taking suo motu cognisance of the rape and murder of a trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG Kar college, the Supreme Court on Tuesday came down heavily on the West Bengal government and police as it raised serious concerns over the handling of the matter.
- ❖ The Supreme Court raised five big questions on the West Bengal government in the backdrop of the case that included filing of an FIR, action taken against college principal, vandalism in the proximity to the crime scene, the initial suicide angle and delay in allowing the parents to see the body.

### On actions against principal

- ❖ Supreme Court slammed the state's shoddy action against college principal Dr Sandip Ghosh, asking when conduct of principal was "under scrutiny, how was he appointed to another college immediately".
- ❖ Ghosh resigned from the position of RG Kar Principal on August 12. However, within hours of resigning from RG Kar Medical College, he was reassigned the principal position at Calcutta National Medical College.
- ❖ CBI is grilling Ghosh for 13 to 14 hours each day by since last Friday.
- ❖ The CBI, which is also examining Ghosh's call records and online chats, has asked him to provide details of his calls before and after the incident on August 9 - the night of incident. They also plan to get his call and data details from the service provider.

### On 'suicide' claim "

- ❖ It appears crime was detected in early hours, medical college principal tried to pass it off as suicide," the bench comprising CJI DY Chandrachud, justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra observed.
- ❖ "What was the principal doing? Why an attempt to pass off the incident as a suicide?" the court asked. On vandalism by mob

- ❖ The court said it could not comprehend how "West Bengal allowed the vandalism of RG Kar hospital by a mob when it was the duty of the police to secure round the clock the hospital where a ghastly crime scene".
- ❖ The court further asked: "How mob vandalised equipment and Kolkata police did not know about it?"
- ❖ What was the police doing? "We are very very concerned," it said.

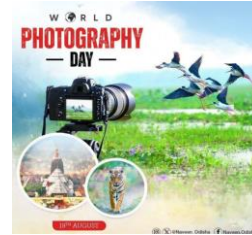
### On handling of the body

- ❖ Chief Justice Chandrachud also highlighted how parents were permitted to see the dead body after several hours.
- ❖ The victim's father has spoken out against what he said was the Mamata Banerjee government's "attempt to silence" those demanding justice for his daughter.
- ❖ Earlier, the victim's parents said they were made to wait for over three hours at the hospital to see their daughter's body. The Supreme Court has directed the CBI to file status report by August 22 on investigation in the case.
- ❖ SC orders removal of name, photos & video clips of Kolkata rape & murder victim from social media platforms

- ❖ The Supreme Court has ordered immediate removal from all social media platforms of any references to the name, photos and video clips of Kolkata rape and murder victim.
- ❖ A bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud gave the directions while hearing the case regarding the alleged rape and murder of a doctor at the at the RG Kar Hospital in Kolkata.
- ❖ The Apex Court also directed the deployment of CISF for the protection and safety of resident doctors, especially female doctors at the RG Kar Hospital.
- ❖ The Court said it has initiated the case on its own regarding the rape and murder of the doctor at the Kolkata hospital to address systemic issues.
- ❖ The Apex Court also set up a national task force to ensure the safety of medical professionals. The court directed the task force to submit its interim report within three weeks and the final report within two months.

- ❖ The Chief Justice of India said that the National Task Force comprising doctors from across the country will provide recommendations on the modalities to be followed nationwide to ensure the safety of women.

### World Photography Day



#### Key Points:

- ❖ World Photography Day is observed every year on 19 August to raise awareness about the importance of photography.
- ❖ Photography is an art form that allows us to freeze and keep moments forever. A single image can evoke a variety of emotions and feelings, which can be relived with a quick gaze.
- ❖ The history of photography dates back to 1837 in France when two men named Joseph Nicéphore Niépce and Louis Daguerre developed the first-ever photographic process or daguerreotype.

