

### Tabla Mastreo Zakir Hussain Passes Away at 73

#### Key Points:

- ❖ Zakir Hussain, the legendary Tabla player, passed away at 73 in a San Francisco hospital, his family confirmed on December 16. Hussain had been admitted at the hospital for the past two weeks and was later taken to the ICU after his condition worsened.
- ❖ Hussain was one of India's most popular and celebrated classical musicians. He was honoured with the Padma Shri in 1988, the Padma Bhushan in 2002, and the Padma Vibhushan in 2023. Zakir Hussain was the son of tabla legend Allah Rakha.
- ❖ Hussain was also awarded the Govt of India's Sangeet Natak Akademi Award in 1990, Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship, Ratna Sadsya in 2018.
- ❖ In 1999, he was awarded the United States National Endowment for the Arts' National Heritage Fellowship, the highest award given to traditional artists and musicians.
- ❖ Hussain has received seven Grammy Award nominations, with four wins. He received three Grammys in February 2024.



### South Korea's parliament votes to impeach president over martial law debacle

#### Key Points:

- ❖ South Korean lawmakers have voted to impeach President Yoon Suk Yeol over his failed attempt to impose martial law, which sparked massive protests across the country. He was suspended after some

members of Yoon's own People Power Party (PPP) voted with the opposition - though the decision still needs be ratified by the constitutional court.

- ❖ Thousands of anti-Yoon protesters celebrated outside the National Assembly on Saturday evening after the impeachment motion passed, with the crowd singing as fireworks broke out overhead.
- ❖ Yoon has vowed to fight on and said he "will never give up", describing the vote as a temporary pause to his presidency.

ବିଶ୍ୱ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଆବଶ୍ୟକତାରେ ଦ୍ରୁତାବଳୀରେ ପରିସ୍ଥିତି ଓ ସାମାଜିକ ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ ଲାଗୁ କରିବାକୁ ନେଇ ଦକ୍ଷିଣ କୋରିଆରେ ଭାରତୀୟ ସରକାର ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରପତି ଯୁନୁ ଯୁନୁ ସ୍ଥିତିର ମହାଭାରତରେ ବିଚାରିତ ହୋଇଛି। ଶନିବାର ଦକ୍ଷିଣ କୋରିଆର ସଂସଦ (ଏସଏସଏ) ଆସେମ୍ବଲିରେ ମହାଭାରତର ଉପରେ ମତଦାନ ହୋଇଥିଲା। ୨୨୫ ଜଣ ସଂସଦ ମହାଭାରତର ସଂସଦରେ ଭୋଟ ଦେଇଥିଲେ। ଭୋଟ ପରେ ବିଚାରାଳୟ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ପଡିବ ନେତା ପାର୍ଟି ଚାନ୍ଦି-କେ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଆଜିର ମହାଭାରତର ଚଳାଚଳାଣର ବଡ଼ ବିକଳ।

ସଂଖ୍ୟାଧିକ (୨୦୫ ଜଣ) ସଂସଦ ମହାଭାରତର ପ୍ରକାର ସଂସଦରେ ଭୋଟ ଦେଇଥିବା ବେଳେ ବିଚାରାଳୟ ସଂସଦର ଉପରେ ହଜାର ବିଶେଷକାରୀ ଏକତ୍ର ହୋଇ ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ କରିବା ସହ ଯୁନୁଙ୍କ ହଜାରବା ବାବିରେ ଘୋରା ଦେଇଥିଲେ। ମହାଭାରତର ଯୁନୁ (ଆମ) ବିଚାରିତ ହେବା ପରେ ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ହାନ୍ଦ ଡକ୍ କାୟାକାରୀ ରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରପତି ବାବିରେ ପ୍ରକାଶକେ। ଏବେ ଦକ୍ଷିଣ କୋରିଆର ସଂଖ୍ୟାଧିକ ଅଂଶର ଯୁନୁଙ୍କ କବିଷ୍ଟର ଉପରେ ବିଚାର କରିବେ ଏବଂ ୧୮ ଓ ୧୯ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ତାହା ଶୁଣାଯିବ।

ଯଦି ଅଂଶର ଗାଳ୍ପ ହଜାରବା ସମ୍ପର୍କ କରନ୍ତି, ତେବେ ଯୁନୁ ଦକ୍ଷିଣ କୋରିଆ ଉପରେ ମହାଭାରତର ବିବା ହେବାରେ ବିଚାର ରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରପତି ହେବେ। ଏକ ଦକ୍ଷିଣରେ ୨୦୧୯ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରପତି ନିର୍ବାଚନ ହେବା ପ୍ରକାର। ଯୁନୁଙ୍କ ମହାଭାରତର ଉପରେ ସାମାଜିକ ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ ପରେ ନ୍ୟାୟାଳୟ ଆସେମ୍ବଲି ସମ୍ମୁଖରେ ହଜାର ହଜାର ବିଶେଷକାରୀଙ୍କ ମୁହଁରେ ଖୁସିର ଲହରୀ ଖେଳିଯାଇଥିଲା। ସେମାନେ ଖୁସିରେ ନାଚିଥିଲେ ଓ ଗାୟିଥିଲେ। କେହି କେହି ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ କୁହୁ ଗୋଇଥିବା ବେଳେ ଆଉ କିଏ ଆଖିରୁ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିଛନ୍ତି। ଗତ ସପ୍ତାହରେ ଯୁନୁଙ୍କ ରକ୍ଷଣାବେ ସପ୍ତାହ ପାଞ୍ଚର ପାର୍ଟି ଅଧିକାରୀ ସଂସଦର କକ୍ଷରେ କରିବା ପରେ ଯୁନୁ ମହାଭାରତର ଭୋଟରୁ ବର୍ତ୍ତି ଯାଇଥିଲେ। ମାଣିକା ରା' ବିଚାର ହେବା ପରେ ଗାଳ୍ପ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟା ବେବାକୁ ବାରମ୍ବାର ବାବି ସବୁ ସେ କ୍ଷମତାରେ ରହିଥିଲେ। ଶନିବାର ଭୋଟ ପୂର୍ବରୁ ବିଚାରାଳୟ ଦେଖିବାକୁ ପଡି କହିଛି ଯେ ସଂଖ୍ୟାଧିକ, ଆନ୍ଦୋଳନ ଶାନ୍ତ, ରକ୍ଷଣା ଓ ଦକ୍ଷିଣ କୋରିଆର ଭବିଷ୍ୟତକୁ ସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ରଖିବା ପାଇଁ ମହାଭାରତର ପ୍ରକାର ହିଁ ଏକମାତ୍ର ଉପାୟ। ମୁଖପାତ୍ର ହାନ୍ଦ କୁଟ-ଆ କହିଛନ୍ତି, ଆମେ ଆଉ ଯୁନୁଙ୍କ ପାରିବାବଳି ସଂଖ୍ୟା କରିପାରିବୁ ନାହିଁ।

- ❖ Since its establishment in 1948, the Republic of Korea, or South Korea, has been mostly under military rule until the establishment of the current democratic system in 1987. Martial Law in South Korea has been imposed 16 times, and the last one was imposed in 1979 when the military dictator and President of South Korea, Park Chun Hee, was assassinated in 1979. Since the establishment of the present constitutional system in 1987, this was the first instance of martial law being imposed in the country

### Why did President Yoon impose the Martial Law?

- ❖ President Yoon Suk Yeol, who assumed office in May 2022, imposed martial law in the country in a television address, accusing the opposition parties of sympathising with North Korea and paralysing the government with anti-state activities. After the end of the Second World

War, the Korean peninsula was divided into the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea).

- ❖ South Korea supported the United States, and other Western countries fought a bloody civil war with communist North Korea supported by China and the Soviet Union. In 1953, a United Nations-supervised armistice was negotiated between the two countries, and a demilitarised zone was established between them, which has become their de facto border. Both countries have not signed a peace treaty and are technically at war.

#### About the National Assembly of South Korea

- ❖ South Korea has a unicameral legislature called the National Assembly. The National Assembly has 300 members who are elected for a four-year term through a combination of direct and indirect elections. The President of South Korea is elected by the people directly for a term of five years.



#### About the Republic of Korea or South Korea

- ❖ It formally came into existence in August 1948. It is a highly industrialised country in Asia and a member of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). Capital: Seoul Currency: South Korean Won President: Yoon Suk Yeol

#### Portugal's Foreign Minister Paulo Rangel Visit to India

##### Key Points:

- ❖ Portugal's Minister of State and Foreign Affairs, Paulo Rangel, was on a four-day visit to India from 12-15 December 2024. This was Paulo Rangel's first visit to India. During his visit to Goa, he met the Goa Governor P.S. Sreedharan Pillai and Chief Minister Pramod Sawant. Goa was a colony of Portugal, which was liberated after the Indian Army launched Operation Vijay in 1961.



- ❖ During his visit to India, he visited New Delhi and Goa. During his visit to New Delhi, he held an official discussion with the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal and the External Affairs Minister, Dr S. Jaishankar.

#### Paulo Rangel's meeting with Dr S Jaishankar

- ❖ The meeting between External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar and Paulo Rangel was held in New Delhi on 13th December 2024. They discussed matters related to bilateral trade and investment, defence, science and technology, tourism, culture, and people-to-people ties.
- ❖ They also discussed regional and global issues.
- ❖ Dr Jaishankar expressed India's thanks to Portugal for supporting the permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council.
- ❖ Russia, China, France, The United Kingdom and the United States are the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

- ❖ Both the ministers also agreed to celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2025.
- ❖ The diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1949 but were broken in 1961 after the liberation of Goa. It was again re-established in 1974.

### India Portugal Relation

- ❖ Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama was the first European to discover a direct sea route to India when his ship landed in Calicut (present-day Kozhikode), Kerala, in May 1498.
- ❖ At the time of Indian independence, Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli were a colony of Portugal.
- ❖ The Portuguese government, led by dictator Antonio Salazar, refused to hand over Goa to India.
- ❖ Indian Army launched Operation Vijay in 1961 to liberate Goa.
- ❖ Diplomatic relations between the two countries were re-established in 1974 after the fall of the Salazar government.

### About Portugal

Portugal is located in the Iberian Peninsula of Southwestern Europe.

- ❖ After the overthrow of King Manuel II in 1910, Portugal became a Republic.
- ❖ Portugal is a member of the European Union and the common monetary union eurozone.
- ❖ Capital: Lisbon
- ❖ Currency: euro
- ❖ President: Luís Montenegro



### Donald Trump calls for shooting down mystery drones spotted across US

#### Key Points:

- ❖ US President-elect Donald Trump has called for the "shooting down" of the mystery drones that have been appearing in various parts of the country.
- ❖ These drones were first spotted in New Jersey a few days ago and are now being seen in other areas as well. The federal government and the White House have so far maintained that these do not pose any national security threat and nor there is any evidence of a foreign hand in it.
- ❖ The appearance of the mystery drones, however, continues to be the subject of investigation. "Mystery Drone sightings all over the Country. Can this really be happening without our government's knowledge? I don't think so," Trump said on Friday in a post on Truth Social, a social media platform owned by him.
- ❖ "Let the public know, and now. Otherwise, shoot them down!!! DJT," he said with his personal signature at the end of the post.
- ❖ The White House on Thursday said there was no evidence yet that the reported drone sightings pose a national security or a public safety threat or that they have a foreign nexus.
- ❖ The Department of Homeland Security and the FBI are investigating these sightings, working closely with state and local law enforcement to provide resources, using numerous detection methods to better understand their origin, White House National Security Communications Advisor John Kirby told reporters.

### Maha Kumbh Mela 2025





### Key Points:

- ❖ The Maha Kumbh Mela 2025, a sacred pilgrimage, will be held in Prayagraj from 13th January to 26th February 2025, drawing millions of pilgrims for spiritual purification, cultural celebration, and unity. The word 'Kumbh' comes from the root 'kumbhak' (the sacred pitcher of elixir of immortality).
- ❖ It is the largest peaceful congregation of pilgrims on earth, during which participants bathe or take a dip in a sacred river. This gathering takes place at 4 different places, namely:
  - ❖ In Haridwar, on the banks of the Ganges.
  - ❖ In Ujjain, on the banks of Shipra.
  - ❖ In Nashik, on the banks of Godavari (Dakshin Ganga).
  - ❖ In Prayagraj, at the confluence of the Ganges, the Yamuna, and the mythical invisible Saraswati.

### Different Types of Kumbh:

- ❖ The Kumbh Mela is celebrated 4 times over a course of 12 years.
- ❖ At Haridwar and Prayagraj, Ardh-Kumbh Mela is held every 6th year.
- ❖ The Maha Kumbh Mela is celebrated at Prayag after 144 years (after 12 'Purna Kumbh Melas').
- ❖ Maagh Kumbh is celebrated every year in the month of Maagh (Jan-Feb) in Prayagraj.
- ❖ Background: The Maha Kumbh Mela, transcribed by Adi Shankaracharya, originates from the Puranas, describing gods and demons battling for the sacred pitcher of Amrit, with Lord Vishnu (as Mohini) securing it from demons. Ancient Origins: During the Maurya and Gupta periods (4th century BCE to 6th century CE), the Kumbh Mela began as smaller gatherings of pilgrims from across the Indian subcontinent.

- ❖ Its significance increased with the rise of Hinduism, particularly under rulers like the Guptas who elevated its status.
- ❖ Harshavardhana king of the Pushyabhuti dynasty started the organisation of the Kumbh fair at Prayagraj. Medieval Patronage: Supported by royal dynasties like the Chola and Vijayanagar empires, Delhi Sultanate, and Mughals.
- ❖ Akbar promoted religious tolerance and granted Naga Sadhus the honour of leading the royal entry to the Mela in 1565. Colonial Period: British administrators, fascinated by the Kumbh Mela's scale and diversity, observed and documented the festival.
- ❖ In the 19th century, James Prinsep chronicled its ritualistic practices and socio-religious dynamics.
- ❖ **Post-Independence Significance:** The Kumbh Mela symbolises national unity and India's cultural heritage, recognized by UNESCO in 2017 as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity for its enduring ancient traditions.
- ❖ **Spiritual Relevance:** Bathing at the Triveni Sangam (Ganges, Yamuna, Sarasvati confluence) is believed to purify sins and lead to spiritual liberation (Moksha).
- ❖ **Cultural Showcase:** At the Kumbh Mela, devotional kirtans, bhajans, and traditional dances like Kathak, Bharatanatyam, and Kuchipudi, highlight themes of spiritual unity and divine love.
- ❖ **Astrological Timing:** Determined by the alignment of the Sun, Moon, and Jupiter, making the event highly auspicious for spiritual activities.

### World Bank okay \$325.10 million loan for UP to boost farmer income

#### Key Points:

- ❖ The World Bank has approved a \$325.10 million loan to the Uttar Pradesh government to boost the farmers' income in the state.

- ❖ The loan will finance the Rs 3,903 crore or \$ 500 million. Uttar Pradesh Agricultural Growth and Rural Enterprises Ecosystem Strengthening (UP-AGREES) Project.
- ❖ The project aims to improve crop productivity and increase farmer's income in the state. The loan was approved by the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors in a meeting in Washington, D.C. United States on 12 December 2024.

#### **Funding of the UP-AGREES Project**

- ❖ The total cost of the UP-AGREES project is Rs 3,903 crore or \$ 500 million.
- ❖ The World Bank will provide a \$325.10 million loan or Rs 2,737 crore.
- ❖ The state government will provide Rs 1,166 crore.
- ❖ The private sector is expected to contribute \$15 million to the project.
- ❖ The Project is also supported by the governments of France, Israel and the Gates Foundation.

#### **World Bank Loan through IBRD**

- ❖ The World Bank loan of \$325.10 million will be provided through its subsidiary, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).
- ❖ The loan repayment period is 33.5 years, including a grace period of 6 years.

#### **Duration of UP-AGREES Project**

- ❖ The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has launched the state's World Bank-funded Uttar Pradesh Agriculture Growth and Rural Enterprise Ecosystem Strengthening (UP-AGREES).
- ❖ The duration of the UP-AGREES scheme is six years.

#### **Aim of the UP-AGREES Project**

- ❖ The aims of the UP-AGREES Projects are as follows ;
- ❖ To increase farmers' incomes through improved crop productivity, adopting digital technologies and climate-resilient

practices, and strengthening market linkages.

- ❖ To strengthen agricultural value chains, improve farmers' access to finance, and create opportunities for value addition.
- ❖ To ensure the timely availability of high-quality seeds to farmers.
- ❖ Development of a comprehensive digital platform for the agriculture sector.
- ❖ Development of an integrated agri-export hub near Jewar Airport, Greater Noida, to facilitate the export of high-value agricultural products like peanuts, Kala Namak rice, vegetables and sesame.

#### **Target Area of the UP-AGREES Project**

- ❖ The UP-AGREES Project aims to increase agricultural productivity and farmers' income in the state's eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bundelkhand areas. According to the Uttar Pradesh Government, Western Uttar Pradesh currently contributes 50% to the state's agricultural output. Eastern Uttar Pradesh accounts for just 28 per cent of the population, and Bundelkhand accounts for a mere 5.5 per cent.
- ❖ The Project will be implemented in the 21 districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh and seven districts of Bundelkhand.
- ❖ It will directly assist 10 lakh farmers, of which one-third will be women.
- ❖ It will support one lakh fisherman families.
- ❖ The government will send 500 farmers abroad to learn about advanced agricultural techniques.

#### **Districts Covered Under UP-AGREES**

- ❖ The UP AGREES project will be launched in 21 districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh — Azamgarh, Mau, Bahraich, Balrampur, Gonda, Siddharthnagar, Deoria, Basti, Maharajganj, Sant Kabir Nagar, Kushinagar, Shravasti,, Gorakhpur,, Jaunpur, Ballia, Ghazipur, Varanasi, Chandauli, Mirzapur, Sonbhadra and Sant

Ravidas Nagar. In Bundelkhand, it will be implemented in Jalaun, Hamirpur, Mahoba, Jhansi, Lalitpur, Banda, and Chitrakoot.

### 3rd India -UK Financial Market Dialogue held in Gift City, Gujarat

- ❖ The third India -United Kingdom (UK) Financial Market Dialogue was held at the GIFT (Gujarat International Financial Tech) City on 12 December 2024.
- ❖ The annual dialogue between the representatives of the financial sector regulators of both countries discussed ways to collaborate in financial regulations and increase trade and investments between the two countries.
- ❖ The Dialogue supported business-to-business links between the two countries and agreed to create the right environment to realise the significant commercial opportunities between these two countries' markets.



### Participants of the 3rd India -UK Financial Market Dialogue

- ❖ The 3rd India -UK Financial Market Dialogue was attended by the senior officials of the Union Ministry of Finance and the His Majesty Treasury (Ministry of Finance of the UK).
- ❖ It was also attended by the financial regulatory agencies of India-Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the International Financial Services Centre Authority (IFSCA), the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)

- ❖ From the United Kingdom, the representatives of the Bank of England (Central Bank of the UK) and the Financial Conduct Authority attended the meeting.

### About Financial Regulators of India

- ❖ All the financial sector regulators in India are statutory bodies. This means that they have been set up under a law made by the Indian parliament. The Indian financial regulators are:

#### Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

- ❖ Under the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934 provision, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was established on 1 April 1935. RBI regulates banks, NBFC, All India Financial Institutions and the Money Market.
- ❖ Headquarters: Mumbai
- ❖ Governor: Sanjay Malhotra

#### Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

- ❖ Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) was established as a non-statutory body on April 12, 1988. It was made a statutory body in 1992 under the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act 1992 provisions.
- ❖ It is the regulator of the capital market and commodities market.
- ❖ Headquarters: Mumbai ▪ Chairpersons: Madhabi Puri Buch

#### Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)

- ❖ The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) was established in April 2000 under the provisions of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India Act 1999. It is the regulator of India's insurance sector.
- ❖ Headquarters: Hyderabad
- ❖ Chairman: Debasish Panda

#### Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)

- ❖ The government of India established the interim Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) on 23rd August 2003. The PFRDA Act 2013 made PFRDA a statutory body. It is the regulator of the pension market in India.
- ❖ Headquarters: New Delhi
- ❖ Chairperson: Dr Deepak Mohanty.

### International Financial Services Centre Authority (IFSCA)

- ❖ The International Financial Services Centre Authority (IFSCA) was established on April 27, 2020, under the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019. It is the regulator of the International Financial Service Centre (IFSC) situated in GIFT City, Gujarat.
- ❖ Headquarters: GIFT City, Gujarat.
- ❖ Chairperson: K Rajaraman

### About the GIFT City

- ❖ The Gujarat Financial Tech (GIFT) City is a multi-service special economic zone situated between Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar in Gujarat. The Gujarat Government has developed GIFT City.
- ❖ India's first and only International Financial Service Center is in GIFT City. GIFT City has been developed as a Smart City and aims to be a Global Financial hub like Singapore in Asia.
- ❖ India's first international stock exchange, India International Exchange (IFSC) Limited (India INX), has been set up in GIFT City.
- ❖ Chairman of GIFT City: Hasmukh Adhia

### PM Modi Chairs the 4th National Conference of Chief Secretaries

#### Key Points:

- ❖ The 4th annual National Conference of Chief Secretaries commenced in New Delhi on 13 December 2024. As per the practice, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair the

last two days of the National Conference of Chief Secretaries, i.e. on 14 and 15th December 2024.

- ❖ The fourth edition of the National Conference of the Chief Secretaries is in New Delhi from 13-15 December 2024. Representatives of the Central Government, Chief Secretaries, and other senior officials of all 28 states, as well as eight Union Territories and domain experts, are participating in the conference.



### About the National Conference of Secretaries

- ❖ The National Conference of Chief Secretaries is an initiative of the government of India to strengthen the spirit of cooperative federalism. The Chief Secretary heads the civil services of their respective states and Union Territories. The Cabinet Secretary heads the civil service at the Union Level.
- ❖ The conference's main aim is to encourage participative governance and partnership between the Centre and the State Governments.
- ❖ To prepare a common development agenda and cohesive action by state and centre to achieve the goals of the common agenda.
- ❖ It provides a platform where the state /Union Territory government can present their best practices in a particular domain.
- ❖ The state/Union Territory can learn from one another's successful practices.

**To achieve this goal, the central government organised the**



- ❖ First National Conference of the Chief Secretaries in June 2022 at Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh.
- ❖ Second Conference was organised in New Delhi in January 2023.
- ❖ Third Conference was also hosted by New Delhi in December 2023.

#### **Theme of the 4th National Conference of the Chief Secretaries**

- ❖ The theme of the 4th National Conference of the Chief Secretaries is -'Promoting Entrepreneurship, Employment & Skilling – Leveraging the Demographic Dividend.
- ❖ The discussion will be held on the best practices the state/UT government will follow to benefit from the demographic dividend, especially in the fields of Manufacturing, Rural Non-farm, Services, Renewable Energy, Urban and Circular Economy.
- ❖ During the Conference, the government will organise four special sessions on Frontier Technology for Viksit Bharat, Economic Reforms in States for Investment, Developing Cities as Economic Growth Hubs and Capacity Building through Mission Karmayogi.
- ❖ The discussion will also be held on achieving self-sufficiency in Agriculture: Edible Oils & Pulses, Care Economy for the Ageing Population, PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana Implementation, and Bharatiya Gyan Parampara.

#### **Uber launches women-only bike taxi service 'Moto Women' in Bengaluru**

##### **Key Points:**

- ❖ Ride-hailing giant Uber India has introduced 'Uber Moto Women' in Bengaluru, marking its first women-exclusive bike taxi service globally.
- ❖ The service, which connects female riders with female drivers, is set to expand to other major metropolitan cities, including

Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, and Hyderabad. Uber Moto Women drivers will have the option to switch between accepting only female riders or all passengers.

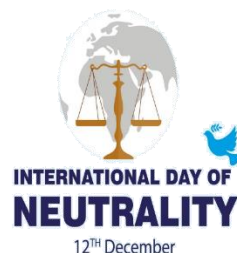


- ❖ Additionally, to ensure passenger safety, Uber has integrated real-time trip sharing with up to five trusted contacts, phone number anonymisation, and RideCheck – a system that monitors route deviations and unexpected stops. A dedicated 24x7 safety helpline also offers priority support for women users.

#### **International Day of Neutrality**

##### **Key Points:**

- ❖ International Day of Neutrality is commemorated on December 12 every year to raise awareness regarding the importance of neutrality in intergovernmental relations and to strengthen peace and security at the global level.
- ❖ On 2 February 2017, the UN General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 71/275 introduced by Turkmenistan, recognised by the UN as a permanently neutral state since 12 December 1995 which noted the link between the preservation of peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and declared 12 December as the International Day of Neutrality.





### What is Neutrality?

- ❖ According to international law, a neutral country is also called a sovereign state. A neutral country is one that remains neutral by keeping itself away from the war between other countries.
- ❖ That is, that country does not support any of the warring countries. Switzerland is a country which is very famous for its policy of 'neutrality'. Due to this policy, Switzerland has been largely successful in avoiding the destruction of the First and Second World Wars.

### Prasar Bharati signs MoU with Hockey India to provide live broadcast of upcoming Hockey India League

#### Key Points:

- ❖ Prasar Bharati has signed an MoU with Hockey India to provide a live broadcast of the upcoming Hockey India League. With this MoU, Doordarshan has become the official broadcast partner for Hockey India League 2024-25. On the occasion, Hockey India League (HIL) governing committee members Bhola Nath Singh and Prasar Bharti Chairman Navneet Sehgal exchanged the MoU.



- ❖ CEO of Prasar Bharti – Gaurav Dwivedi
- ❖ DG of Akashvani – Pragya Paliwal Gaur
- ❖ DG of Doordarshan- Kanchan Prashad
- ❖ DG of Doordarshan (News) – Priya Kumar

### 11 December – UNICEF Day

#### Key Points:

- ❖ UNICEF Day is celebrated annually on 11 December to commemorate the establishment of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) in 1946.
- ❖ This day highlights the organization's critical role in advocating for and protecting the rights of children worldwide.
- ❖ The day also stresses the significance of worldwide collaboration in tackling children's difficulties, campaigning for equal chances, and ensuring impoverished children have access to important services.

