

International

Maia Sandu Sworn in as President of Moldova for 2nd Term



About News:-

- ❖ On December 24, 2024, Ms. Maia Sandu took the oath of office as president of Moldova, a European nation, for a second four-year term.
- ❖ Sandu became Moldova's first female president with a landslide victory in 2020.
- ❖ Moldova's pro-Western president, Maia Sandu, was sworn in for a second term in what analysts call a critical milestone for the integration of one of Europe's poorest countries into the European Union.
- ❖ Sandu defeated her Russian-friendly opponent, Alexandr Stoianoglo, in the second round of a hard-fought election last month.
- ❖ This time, Sandu secured 930,139 votes in the runoff, defeating her opponent Alexandr Stoianoglo - who garnered 750,430 votes - thus becoming Moldova's first directly elected president to win a second term. The Constitutional Court of Moldova officially validated the results of the November 3 presidential runoff, confirming Maia Sandu's re-election as president.

About Moldova

- ❖ Capital: Chişinău
- ❖ Currency: Moldovan leu
- ❖ President : Maia Sandu

National

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Lead Historic E-Distribution of 58 Lakh SVAMITVA Property Cards on 27th December 2024



About News:-

- ❖ Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, via video conferencing, will preside over the e-distribution of SVAMITVA Property Cards on 27th December 2024 (Friday) at 12:30 PM marking a monumental milestone in India's rural empowerment and governance journey.
- ❖ The event will witness the distribution of 58 lakh SVAMITVA Property Cards across approximately 50,000 villages spanning 10 States – Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and 2 Union Territories – Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. This event will also mark a major milestone of crossing more than 2 crore property cards preparation and distribution under the SVAMITVA scheme and distribution of more than 58 lakh property cards on a Single Day.
- ❖ During the event, the Prime Minister will interact with selected beneficiaries and deliver a Nationwide address, in the August presence of Union Minister of Panchayati Raj Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh, Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj Prof. S. P. Singh Baghel and Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj Shri Vivek Bharadwaj.
- ❖ The ceremony will also be attended virtually by several Chief Ministers, Union Ministers, senior officials, panchayat representatives, and stakeholders.

- ❖ Around 13 Union Ministers will physically join from designated locations from across the country, to oversee the regional distribution ceremony of property cards.
- ❖ Extensive Preparations for a Nationwide Transformative Impact of the SVAMITVA Scheme
- ❖ The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, in collaboration with the States and Union Territories, will maximize outreach and awareness about the SVAMITVA Scheme and other flagship initiatives of the Ministry by organizing orientation programs at around 20,000 locations across the country on 27th December 2024.

Key Achievements under the SVAMITVA Scheme

- ❖ Drone Mapping Coverage: Survey completed in 3.17 lakh villages.
- ❖ Property Card Distribution: Over 2.19 crore property cards were prepared across 1.49 lakh villages.
- ❖ Improved Governance: Digitally validated property records have strengthened local governance and enhanced Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDs).
- ❖ Financial Inclusion: Property cards have facilitated access to institutional credit, empowering rural citizens.
- ❖ Women Empowerment: Legal ownership of properties has provided women with enhanced financial and social security.
- ❖ Dispute Resolution: Accurate property mapping has significantly reduced property disputes.

SVAMITVA: A Game-Changer for Rural India

- ❖ Launched on 24th April 2020 (On National Panchayati Raj Day) by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the SVAMITVA Scheme aims to provide a "Record of Rights" to property owners in rural Abadi areas using drone and GIS technology.
- ❖ Despite the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Prime Minister virtually distributed the first set of Property Cards on 11th October 2020,

demonstrating the Government's resolute commitment to this transformative initiative.

- ❖ The SVAMITVA Scheme exemplifies the Whole-of-Government approach, fostering inter-departmental synergy to bring about financial inclusion, rural stability, and economic growth.
- ❖ It has not only empowered property owners but also enabled better infrastructure planning, financial stability, and sustainable development in rural India.

Economic

ADB to provide USD 500 million loan to support sustainable infra projects in India

About News:-

- ❖ The Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$500 million loan to support green and sustainable infrastructure projects aligned with the country's climate commitments on 20th December 2024.
- ❖ The ADB loan, with a sovereign guarantee, will be extended to the India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL).



Key Points:-

- ❖ The signatories to the Financing Environmentally Sustainable Growth in Infrastructure Project were Ms. Juhi Mukherjee Joint Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, for the Government of India, and Country Director Mio Oka for ADB.
- ❖ To meet its net-zero commitments, the country needs immense private capital investment that will require innovative financing platforms and risk-mitigation instruments to address inherent sector risks and market asymmetries. As a strategic development finance institution, IIFCL is well-suited to meet these needs.

- ❖ ADB has worked closely with IIFCL over the years to develop its operational and risk management capacities. As IIFCL has developed and evolved, its operations are increasingly geared toward leveraging private sector resources that necessitate the expansion of its product offerings for potential institutional investors.
- ❖ The project will build the institutional capacity of IIFCL to integrate green and best practices into the infrastructure projects. A sustainability unit and an environmental sustainability framework and scoring method to assess the sustainability rating of the projects will also be established.

About ADB:-

- ❖ Asian Development Bank
- ❖ Formation:- 19 December 1966
- ❖ Headquarters:- Mandaluyong, Metro Manila
- ❖ President :- Masatsugu Asakawa

Appointment

Arunish Chawla appointed as revenue secretary



About News:-

- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet on Wednesday appointed secretary in the Department of Pharmaceuticals Arunish Chawla as the next revenue secretary.
- ❖ A 1992-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the Bihar cadre, Chawla will take over from economic affairs secretary Ajay Seth.
- ❖ Seth is holding additional charge of revenue secretary following Sanjay Malhotra's appointment as Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor.
- ❖ Chawla has been serving as secretary in the Department of Pharmaceuticals within the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers since November 1, 2023.

Key Points:-

- ❖ Chawla will continue to hold additional charge of secretary in the Ministry of Culture until a regular appointment is made. Chawla has more than three years in service left with his tenure scheduled to end in July 2028.
- ❖ Between 2014 and 2016, Chawla served as a joint secretary in the Expenditure Department of the finance ministry.
- ❖ He has also held the position of minister (economics) at the Indian Embassy in the United States and worked as a senior economist with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- ❖ Chawla holds a postgraduate and PhD in economics from the London School of Economics.
- ❖ Amit Agrawal, chief executive officer (CEO) at the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), will become secretary in the Department of Pharmaceuticals. Vineet Joshi has been appointed secretary in the Department of Higher Education.

Science & Technology

Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh launches Rashtraparv Website & Mobile App on Good Governance Day



About News:-

- ❖ Defence Secretary Shri Rajesh Kumar Singh launched the Rashtraparv Website along with its Mobile App on Dec 25, 2024, on the occasion of 'Good Governance Day' commemorating the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Key Points:-

- ❖ The website will facilitate access to information related to the organization of national events such as Republic Day,

Beating Retreat Ceremony, Independence Day, etc., live streaming, purchase of tickets, provide information related to seating arrangements & route maps of events, etc.

- ❖ The website and mobile application have been a result of a consultative process adopted by the Ministry of Defence. The states had suggested a portal for the management of tableaux design data. Similarly, viewers of the Republic Day event in the feedback had suggested to have information regarding events, parade, and tableaux with them. The Rashtraparv website has been developed by incorporating all these.
- ❖ The website can be accessed at <https://rashtraparv.mod.gov.in> and the Mobile App can be downloaded from the Government App Store (M-Seva).
- ❖ The initiative is a step further towards openness, transparency, and citizen-centric governance and is a fitting tribute to late Sh Atal Bihari Vajpayee on Good Governance Day.

Defence

India & Sri Lanka hold Naval Exercise SLINEX 2024 in Vishakhapatnam



About News:-

- ❖ The bilateral Naval exercise between India and Sri Lanka, SLINEX 24 (Sri Lanka - India Exercise 2024) was conducted from 17 - 20 Dec 24 at Visakhapatnam under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command in two phases.
- ❖ The harbour phase was held from 17 - 18 Dec 24 and the sea phase from 19 - 20 Dec 24.

Key Points:-

- ❖ The 11th edition of the annual India-Sri Lanka Naval exercise SLINEX 24 concluded at Visakhapatnam on 20 December 2024.
- ❖ The 10th edition of the SLINEX exercise was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 03 - 08 April 2023.
- ❖ INS Sumitra of the Eastern Fleet, along with the Special Forces team participated from the Indian side, whereas, SLNS Sayura, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, along with the Special Forces team participated from the Sri Lanka Navy.
- ❖ The inaugural ceremony of the exercise was held on 17 Dec 24 and followed by the Harbour Phase, during which, the participants engaged in professional and social exchanges.
- ❖ The Sea Phase commenced on 19 Dec 24 and included joint exercises by Special Forces of both the navies, gun firings, communication procedures, seamanship as well as navigation evolutions and helicopter operations.
- ❖ SLINEX series of bilateral exercises were initiated in 2005 and since then regular exercises have been conducted.
- ❖ The current edition of the exercise has further strengthened the ties between the two maritime neighbours and contributed towards creating a safe and rule-based Maritime domain thereby taking forward the GoI's resolve and vision of Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).

Award

President Murmu confers 17 children with Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar for excellence in various fields



About News:-

- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to 17 children, for their exceptional courage and outstanding achievements across diverse fields, including art, culture, sports, and innovation at a ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre today (December 26).
- ❖ The awards are given to children between the ages group 5 and 18 years.
- ❖ The recipients, comprising seven boys and ten girls from 14 states and Union territories, were honored with a medal, a certificate, and a citation booklet.

Who received awards?

- ❖ Keya Hatkar (14), an author and disability advocate, was recognized for her excellence in art and culture. Despite living with spinal muscular atrophy, she initiated programs like "IM POSSIBLE" and "SMA-ART" to promote inclusivity and disability awareness.
- ❖ Ayaan Sajad (12), a Sufi singer from Kashmir, was honored for his soulful contributions to Kashmiri music, while Vyas Om Jignesh (17), who has cerebral palsy, was commended for his dedication to Sanskrit literature, memorizing over 5,000 shlokas and performing in more than 500 shows.
- ❖ Saurav Kumar (9) was recognized for his courage in saving three girls from drowning and Ioanna Thapa (17) was honored for rescuing 36 residents from a fire.
- ❖ In the innovation category, Sindhoora Raja (15) received an award for developing self-stabilizing devices for Parkinson's patients, and Risheek Kumar (17), a cybersecurity entrepreneur, was recognized for establishing Kashmir's first cybersecurity firm.
- ❖ Hembati Nag, a judo player from a Naxal-affected region, was honored for her resilience in overcoming challenges to win a silver medal at the Khelo India National Games. Chess prodigy Anish Sarkar, the

youngest FIDE-ranked player at three years old, was also recognized.

Sport

Paris Olympian Raiza Dhillon creates a national record



About News:-

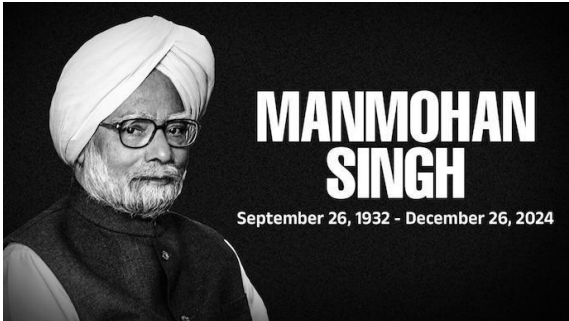
- ❖ Paris Olympian Raiza Dhillon from Haryana made it to both the women's Skeet finals of the ongoing 67th National Shooting Championship Competitions (NSCC) for Shotgun events at New Delhi's Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range (DKSSR).
- ❖ Raiza created a new national record and equaled another during her impressive run. Her score of 122, which placed her at the top of both the junior women's and women's qualification rounds, surpassed Simranpreet Kaur Johal's junior record of 120 set at the 2018 Jaipur Nationals and matched Ganemat Sekhon's performance at the recent ISSF World Cup Final in Delhi.

Key Points:-

- ❖ In the junior men's Skeet qualification, Telangana's Muneek Battula shattered the national record with a score of 123, surpassing Abhay Singh Sekhon's previous record of 122 set in Delhi in 2019.
- ❖ Punjab also won three of the four golds in the team competitions, with Ganemat Sekhon winning as part of their women's team and Bhavtegh Gill and Harmehar Lally winning in both the junior and men's team categories.
- ❖ 67th National Shooting Championship Competitions (Shotgun) Skeet Finals.
- ❖ Venue: Dr. Karni Singh Shooting Range

Obituary

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh passes away at 92



About News:-

Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, 92, passed away at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences here late on Thursday (December 26, 2024) evening.

Key Points:-

- ❖ Dr. Manmohan Singh was born on September 26, 1932, in Gah, now in Pakistan. His early education began at Panjab University, where his exceptional academic abilities shone brightly. He later pursued advanced studies at the prestigious Oxford University and Cambridge University, earning a doctorate in economics
- ❖ He joined the Government of India as Economic Advisor in the Commerce Ministry in 1971 and was soon promoted to Chief Economic Advisor in the Finance Ministry in 1972. After a short stint at the UNCTAD Secretariat, he was appointed Secretary General of the South Commission in Geneva from 1987-1990. In addition, Dr Singh also held the positions of Secretary in the Finance Ministry, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Advisor to the Prime Minister, and Chairman of the University Grants Commission.
- ❖ Singh, who served as the finance minister in the then Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao-led dispensation from 1991-1996, is credited as a key architect of the economic reforms effected by the government that broke the stranglehold of socialist-era policies.

- ❖ In his political career, Singh has been a member of the Rajya Sabha since 1991, where he was Leader of the Opposition between 1998 and 2004.
- ❖ Dr Singh has been a Member of the Rajya Sabha since 1991, where he was Leader of the Opposition from 1998-2004. Following victories in 2004 and 2009, he took the Office of Prime Minister on May 22, 2004, and again on May 22, 2009.

Award:-

- ❖ Manmohan Singh has been awarded with Padma Vibhushan in 1987,
- ❖ the Euro Money Award for Finance Minister of the Year in 1993,
- ❖ the Asia Money Award for Finance Minister of the Year in both 1993 and 1994 and
- ❖ the Jawaharlal Nehru Birth Centenary Award of the Indian Science Congress in 1995.

Important Day

International Day of Epidemic Preparedness – 27 December 2024

About Day:-

- ❖ The International Day of Epidemic Preparedness is marked worldwide on December 27.



About International Day of Epidemic Preparedness

- ❖ Origin: The first-ever International Day of Epidemic Preparedness was held on 27 December 2020 to advocate the importance of the prevention of, preparedness for, and partnership against epidemics.
- ❖ It was in December 2019 that the highly infectious Coronavirus pandemic erupted in China. As the rate of infection increased and the number of afflicted persons expanded,

there was pressure on health systems across the world.

- ❖ It was not just a shortage of healthcare professionals, beds, and ventilators but at one point in time, critical equipment such as hand sanitizers and surgical masks were also out of stock.
- ❖ The UN General Assembly asked WHO to mark December 27 as the International Day of Epidemic Preparedness to highlight the need for preparedness, cooperation, and epidemic prevention.



**MPSC
WALLAH**

