

International

PM Modi receives Russia's most prestigious civilian award from President Putin



About News:-

- ❖ At St. Catherine's Hall in the Moscow Kremlin, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was ceremoniously presented with the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle the First-Called, which was bestowed upon him in 2019.
- ❖ The order was given to the Indian Prime Minister in recognition of his outstanding work in fostering cordial relations and a privileged strategic alliance between Russia and India.

About Award:-

- ❖ Russia's highest civilian award, the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle the First-Called, was first given to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019. The official presentation ceremony, however, is now scheduled for Tuesday at the Moscow Kremlin's famous St. Catherine's Hall.
- ❖ Tsar Peter the Great established this esteemed honor in 1698, and it is only given for the most outstanding military or civilian service to the Russian state.
- ❖ The order bears Saint Andrew's name. Saint Andrew is regarded as Russia's patron saint and the first apostle of Jesus. It is regarded as a symbol of the highest distinction in Russian society and international relations due to its lengthy history and selective bestowal.

Importance of the Award:-

- ❖ The prize that PM Modi has received carries significant diplomatic weight as a representation of the long-standing and

robust relationship between Russia and India. It acknowledges Modi's "distinguished contribution to the development of friendly ties between the two countries and a privileged strategic partnership between Russia and India."

- ❖ This honor highlights various important facets of relations between Russia and India:
- ❖ Defense, energy, and technological cooperation are just a few of the sectors in which the two countries' strategic alliance is deep, as evidenced by the prize.
- ❖ Personal Diplomacy: It emphasizes the value of interpersonal connections in global diplomacy, particularly recognizing Modi's attempts to build rapport with the Russian leadership.
- ❖ Historical Continuity: The award reminds us of the strong friendship that has existed between Russia and India since the Soviet era and is now thriving in the current geopolitical environment.

About Russia:-

- ❖ **Capital:-** Moscow
- ❖ **Currency:-** Ruble
- ❖ **President :-** Vladimir Putin
- ❖ **Prime Minister:-** Mikhail Mishustin

National

Union Cabinet approves India's signing of the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement



About News:-

- ❖ The signature of the 'High Seas Treaty', also known as the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, was authorized by the Union Cabinet of India, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on July 2, 2024. UNCLOS is an international treaty that governs maritime law.
- ❖ The agreement would be implemented under the direction of India's Ministry of Earth Sciences (MOES), strengthening India's strategic footprint outside of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and its contribution to marine conservation.
- ❖ Dr. Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (MoS-Independent Charge), MoES, and Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary, MoES, were present at the Cabinet Meeting.

Key Points:-

- ❖ Through international coordination and cooperation, this agreement aims to safeguard marine biological variety in international waters for the long term and to ensure its sustainable use.
- ❖ It consists of procedures for creating marine protected areas, carrying out environmental impact assessments, and gaining access to marine genetic resources.
- ❖ It advocates for an all-encompassing, ecosystem-focused strategy built on the precautionary principle and utilizing both conventional wisdom and the most recent scientific findings.
- ❖ In addition, it makes sure that the benefits of marine resources are distributed fairly, which is in line with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), most notably SDG 14 (Life Below Water).

About BBNJ Agreement:-

- ❖ The signing of the BBNJ Agreement, which was decided upon in March 2023, will take place for two years beginning in September 2023. After 60 ratifications, it will become an international treaty with legal force. Eight nations—Belize, Chile, Cuba, Mauritius, Micronesia, Monaco, Palau, and Seychelles—have ratified the agreement as of June 2024, out of the 91 that had signed it.

- ❖ Goal: In regions known as the High Seas that are outside of national borders, this agreement seeks to preserve and sustainably use marine biodiversity.
- ❖ High seas are international waters available for legitimate uses like overflight, navigation, and the installation of subsurface cables and pipelines. These waters are essential to the health of the oceans, the welfare of coastal communities, and the sustainability of the planet.

Maharashtra

Maharashtra announces free higher education for EWS, SEBC, and OBC girls



About News:-

The state government issued a Government Resolution (GR) Monday to formalise its recent announcement to extend 100 percent reimbursement of tuition and examination fees for female students from Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) with annual family incomes up to Rs 8 lakh in professional courses.

Key points:-

- ❖ The GR by the higher and technical education department will also be applicable for girls from Socially and Economically Backward Classes (SEBC) and orphans. The initiative aims to boost the enrollment of female students in professional courses such as engineering, medicine, pharmacy, and agriculture, among others.
- ❖ According to information provided by the office of Higher and Technical Education Minister Chandrakant Patil, the scheme is effective from the current academic year.
- ❖ The Maharashtra government has announced significant initiatives aimed at enhancing access to higher education for economically disadvantaged girls and providing fee waivers for orphaned students.

- ❖ These measures, totalling Rs 906 crore, underscore the government's commitment to women's education and welfare.

About Maharashtra:-

- ❖ **Capital:-** Mumbai
- ❖ **Chief Minister :-** Eknath Shinde
- ❖ **Governor :-** Ramesh Bais

Economic

India to provide USD 2.5 mn LoC for solar power plant in Guyana



About News:-

- ❖ A line of credit (LoC) worth USD 2.50 million, sponsored by India, has been provided by the Export-Import Bank of India (EXIM Bank) to the Government of Guyana for the installation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) power plant at the Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA) in Timehri, Guyana.
- ❖ The LoC was signed on February 29, 2024, and went into force on June 24, 2024.
- ❖ To lower carbon emissions and advance sustainable energy alternatives, this agreement supports Guyana's efforts to switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources.

Key Points:-

- ❖ **Credit Allocation:** Of the total credit, at least 75% must come from within India in the form of products, works, and services; the remaining 25% may come from outside the country, or through international sourcing.
- ❖ **Payment Timeline:** 48 months following the project's completion is the deadline for payouts.
- ❖ **Export Eligibility:** If qualified goods and services are financed through a partnership with EXIM Bank and fulfill the requirements outlined in the Indian government's Foreign Trade Policy, they may be exported from India.

About Guyana:-

- ❖ **Capital-** Georgetown
- ❖ **Currency-** Guyanese dollar (GYD)
- ❖ **President-** Irfaan Ali

Appointment

RBI approves Govind Singh's re-appointment as MD & CEO of Utkarsh SFB

About News:-

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) authorized on July 8, 2024, Govind Singh's reappointment to the positions of Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Utkarsh Small Finance Bank Limited (USFBL) for a three-year term beginning on September 21, 2024.
- ❖ His current term expires on September 20, 2024.
- ❖ His reappointment was authorized by the USFBL Board during their meeting on January 27, 2024.



About Govind Singh:-

- ❖ Govind Singh is the founder of Utkarsh Coreinvest Ltd. (Erstwhile Utkarsh Micro Finance Ltd.), the promoting institution of USFBL.
- ❖ He was appointed as MD & CEO of USFBL in 2017. He resigned from the post in May 2018 and was reappointed in September 2018.
- ❖ He is also a Director at Utkarsh Welfare Foundation (UWF).
- ❖ He has served as a member of the Working Group to review the Business Correspondent (BC) Model in India.
- ❖ He has also held the position of Head of ICICI Bank's Trust, Associations, Societies and Clubs (TASC) division and Rural and Agri Liabilities.
- ❖ Before this, he was employed by the State Bank of Patiala, Allahabad Bank, Axis Bank, Bank Internasional Indonesia, and Surya Roshni Group (financial services).

About Utkarsh Small Finance Bank Limited (USFBL):-

- ❖ **Headquarters** - Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh (UP)
- ❖ **MD & CEO** - Govind Singh

Science & Technology

2 Gaganyaan Astronauts to Go to ISS Aboard the Axiom-4 Mission



About News:-

- ❖ Recently, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has shortlisted two of its four trained Gaganyaan astronauts for an Axiom-4 Mission to the International Space Station (ISS) in collaboration with United States' NASA later this year
- ❖ Only one of the shortlisted astronauts will go on the mission.

About Axiom-4 Mission :-

- ❖ It will take the Indian astronauts to the ISS
- ❖ This is the fourth private astronaut mission of NASA and a private US company Axiom Space.
- ❖ The mission is expected to dock with the ISS for fourteen days.
- ❖ Contract with SpaceX: Axiom Space has contracted SpaceX as a launch provider for transportation to and from the space station, and to familiarize the private astronauts with systems, procedures, and emergency preparedness for the Dragon spacecraft.

About this mission:-

- ❖ The information on the NASA website states that the mission will occur "no earlier than October 2024."
- ❖ Before the expedition, the astronauts must travel to the United States for training on the ins and outs of the International Space Station.

- ❖ Although they have received standard space-fairing training, a large portion of it was received in India with an emphasis on Gaganyaan modules.

Award

HCLTech chairperson Roshni Nadar Malhotra was awarded France's highest civilian honour

About News:-

The highest civilian honor in France, the "Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur" (Knight of the Legion of Honour), has been bestowed upon Roshni Nadar Malhotra, the chairperson of the IT services company HCLTech.



Key Points:-

- ❖ The prize, which is given in recognition of exceptional service to France, acknowledged Nadar Malhotra's contributions to sustainability and business, as well as his attempts to advance economic relations between France and India.
- ❖ HCLTech, the fourth biggest participant in India's \$250 billion IT export market, provides services to French businesses in a variety of sectors, including manufacturing, financial services, pharmaceuticals, and aerospace. To strengthen the regional technological ecosystem in France, also involves teaching middle school students how to code software.

About Award:-

- ❖ Regardless of the awardees' nationality, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the French Republic for exceptional service to the country is the Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur, an honor established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte.
- ❖ The Grand Master of the Order of the Legion of Honour is the President of the French Republic.
- ❖ The French Ambassador's home in Delhi hosted a special ceremony to present the honor.

Sport

Gagan Narang Announced as New Chef de Mission in Paris Olympics 2024; PV Sindhu, Sharath Kamal to be Flag Bearers



About News:-

- ❖ Gagan Narang, a four-time Olympian and bronze medallist in the men's 10m air rifle competition at the London 2012 Olympic Games, has been named the Indian team's chef-de-mission for the 2024 Paris Olympics, formally known as the "Games of the XXXIII Olympiad," to be held in Paris, France.
- ❖ Following the departure of Padma Vibhushan recipient MC Mary Kom from the Chef-de-Mission position in April 2024 due to personal reasons, he was promoted from the deputy chef-de-mission position.
- ❖ Dr. PT Usha, President of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), announced his appointment.
- ❖ The Paris 2024 Olympics will run from July 26, 2024, to August 11, 2024.

The Chef-de-Mission's role:-

- ❖ Before the Olympics, the Chef-de-Mission attends seminars with athletes, management, and the Mission Team in his capacity as the team's spokesperson.
- ❖ They keep a diplomatic posture to settle disputes or disagreements and guarantee that Olympic customs are followed.

Additional declarations:-

- ❖ India's two-time Olympic badminton winner PV Sindhu and senior table tennis player A Sharath Kamal, a 13-time Commonwealth Games medallist, will carry the flag at the Paris Olympics Opening Ceremonies.

- ❖ Neeraj Chopra, an Olympic javelin thrower, will captain India's 28-person athletics delegation at the Paris Games.
- ❖ There are 17 male and 11 female athletes in the contingent.

About Indian Olympic Association (IOA):-

- ❖ **Formed** - 1927
- ❖ **Headquarters** - New Delhi, Delhi
- ❖ **President** - P. T. Usha

Miscellaneous

India Hosts 6th EAS Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation in Mumbai



About News:-

From July 4–5, 2024, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India played host to the 6th East Asia Summit (EAS) Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation. In collaboration with the governments of Australia and Indonesia, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) of the Government of India (GoI) hosted the conference.

Key Points:-

- ❖ As Knowledge Partners for the Conference, the National Maritime Foundation (NMF) and the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)-India Centre (AIC) at Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) worked together.
- ❖ India's dedication to fortifying ASEAN-led EAS procedures and endorsing the EAS Plan of Action 2024–2028 was demonstrated at the EAS Conference.
- ❖ Six Thematic Sessions will be covered at the conference: Maritime Connectivity; Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) and Search and Rescue (SAR); Combating Illegal, Unreported, and

Unregulated (IUU) Fishing; Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP); Regional Maritime Domain Awareness.

- ❖ Leaders from 18 nations convene at EAS, the only leader-led platform for strategic conversation in the Indo-Pacific area, to deliberate on political, security, and economic issues.

The government makes the ISI mark mandatory for stainless steel, aluminum utensils



About News:-

- ❖ The Indian Requirements Institution (ISI) mark for kitchen utensils made of aluminum and stainless steel must now adhere to national quality requirements established by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) under a directive from the Government of India (GoI).
- ❖ The BIS created the ISI mark intending to improve consumer safety by guaranteeing product quality and safety.
- ❖ These kitchenware must now bear the ISI mark; failure to do so is penalized.

ISI Mark QCO Issuance:-

- ❖ The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI)'s Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) issued the Quality Control Order (QCO) on March 14, 2024, mandating that these cooking utensils bear the ISI mark.
- ❖ The order forbids the production, importation, selling, distribution, storing, or display of aluminum or stainless steel cutlery without the BIS standard mark.

Standards and Trust in Customers:-

- ❖ Two Indian Standards have been developed by BIS: IS 1660:2024 for aluminum utensils and IS 14756:2022 for stainless steel.
- ❖ These guidelines address several topics, such as:
- ❖ The Indian Standard IS 14756:2022—which outlines the specifications for several kinds of utensils used in cooking, serving, dining, and storage—is the product of the BIS's codification of these qualities. Material criteria to guarantee the safe composition of materials used in manufacturing are included.
- ❖ The Indian Standard IS 1660:2024, created by the BIS, describes the requirements for cast and wrought aluminum utensils with a capacity of up to 30 liters. This includes hard anodizing and non-stick, unreinforced plastic covering. By adhering to this standard, aluminum utensils are guaranteed to meet the strictest performance and material quality requirements.

