

## Economy

### Offshore Mineral Blocks

#### Why in the news?

Union Mines Minister G. Kishan Reddy has launched the first tranche of offshore mineral blocks auction in New Delhi.



#### About the First tranche of Auction:

- ❖ This first tranche of auction includes 13 mineral blocks spanning across the Arabian Sea and Andaman Sea.
- ❖ It features a mix of minerals, such as construction sand, lime-mud, and polymetallic nodules and crusts.
- ❖ **Significance:** These minerals are critical for infrastructure development, high-tech manufacturing, and the green energy transition.

### 13th National Seed Congress

#### Why in the news?



The 13th National Seed Congress (NSC) 2024 was inaugurated by Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

#### About the NSC 2024:

- ❖ The three-day Congress is being organized from 28 to 30 November 2024, at the International Rice Research Institute South Asia Regional Centre (ISARC) in Varanasi.
- ❖ It provides a vital platform for exchanging knowledge, fostering partnerships, and driving innovation to strengthen seed systems.
- ❖ **Significance:**
  - It reflects India's commitment to ensuring food security, addressing climate challenges, and empowering smallholder farmers with access to quality seeds.

### Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF)

#### Why in the news?

The Union Government has set up the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF) through use of priority sector lending shortfall.

- ❖ It has been established for creating urban infrastructure in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.
- ❖ The fund is managed by the National Housing Bank.

#### About UIDF:

- ❖ It aims to supplement the efforts of the State Governments/UTs for urban infrastructure development works implemented through Public/ State Agencies, Municipal Corporations and Urban Local Bodies.
- ❖ It will provide a stable and predictable source of financing for providing basic services like Sewerage and Solid Waste Management, Water Supply and Sanitation, construction and improvement of drains/ storm water drains, etc.

#### Science And Technology

##### India International Science Festival (IISF)

#### Why in the news?

- ❖ India International Science Festival (IISF) will be held at Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati during 30 Nov. to 3 Dec. 2024.
- ❖ The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is the nodal department for this year's IISF.
- ❖ North East India will witness this festival for the first time.

#### About the IISF:

- ❖ It is a unique festival of science society engagement which was initiated in the year 2015 and the very first IISF was organised at IIT Delhi.

- Vijnana Bharati, a science movement of India conceptualized this science festival.
- ❖ The **theme** of this 10th edition of IISF is "Transforming India into an S&T driven Global Manufacturing Hub".



#### Defence And Security

##### 'EKLAVYA'

#### Why in the news?

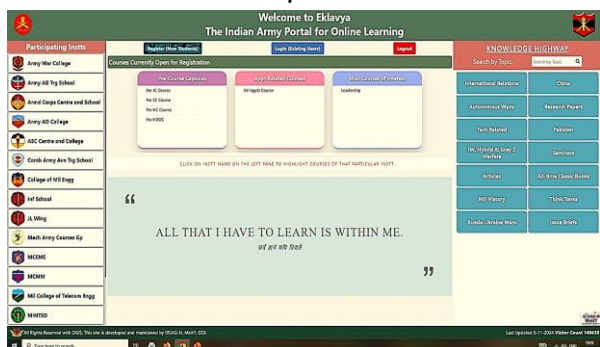
General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) has launched an online learning platform for the Indian Army nicknamed as "Eklavya".

- ❖ This initiative aligns with the:
  - Indian Army propelling itself into the "Decade of Transformation" as envisioned by the COAS.
  - Indian Army's theme for 2024 as the "Year of Technology Absorption."

#### About the platform:

- ❖ It has been developed under the aegis of Headquarters Army Training Command with Army War College as the sponsor agency.

- ❖ A total of 96 courses by 17 Category 'A' Training Establishments of the Indian Army have already been hosted on the platform.



## Awards and Honors

### IFFI Goa 2024

#### Why in the news?

The 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) concluded with a grand closing ceremony at the Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Indoor Stadium in Goa on November 28.

- ❖ It showcased over 200 films from 75 countries.

#### List of various award winners:

Golden Peacock Award (Best Film)	Toxic (Lithuanian language)
Best Actress	Vesta Matuliyte and Iva Rupeikaite (Toxic)
Best Actor:	Clement Faveau (Holy Cow)
Best Director	Bogdan Muresanu (The New Year That Never Came)
Special Jury Award	Louise Courvoisier (Holy Cow)
Special Mention (Best Actor Male)	Adam Besa (Who Do I Belong To)
Best Web Series	Lampan (Marathi language)
Best Debut for Feature Film Director	Sarah Friedland (Familiar Touch)
Personality of the Year award	Vikrant Massey
Best Debut Director award	Navjyot Bandivadekar (for his Marathi film Gharat Ganpati.)
ICFT-UNESCO Gandhi Medal.	Swedish filmmaker Levan Akin's Crossing
Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award	Australian filmmaker Phillip Noyce





## 2024 OPCW-The Hague Award

### Why in the news?

The Indian Chemical Council (ICC) has won the 2024 OPCW The Hague Award.

- ❖ It was conferred at a ceremony during the 29th Session of the Conference of the States Parties (CSP) of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) at the Hague on November 25, 2024.
- ❖ This is the first time that the award recognises the efforts of a chemical industry body.

### About the award:

- ❖ In 2013, OPCW was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its extensive efforts to eliminate chemical weapons.



- ❖ To preserve the legacy of this achievement, the OPCW established the 'OPCW-The Hague Award' in collaboration with the Municipality of The Hague in 2014.
- ❖ The award recognizes individuals and organizations that play a significant role in advancing the goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

### Chemical Weapon Convention

- ❖ The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) came into force in 1997, and presently has 113 States Parties.
- ❖ OPCW, with its Secretariat in The Hague, is the implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention, with a mission to achieve a world free of chemical weapons. India is an original signatory to the Convention.
- ❖ NACWC is the national authority responsible for implementing the Convention in India.

### Index and Report

## Network Readiness Index 2024

### Why in the news?

India has been ranked 49th in the Network Readiness Index 2024 (NRI 2024) report.

- ❖ Last year, India was ranked at 60th position.

### India's Performance in the index:

- ❖ India has not only improved its ranking, but also improved its score from 49.93 in 2023 to 53.63 in 2024.
- ❖ It is noteworthy that India leads in several indicators. The report states that:
  - India secured 1st rank in 'AI scientific publications', 'AI talent concentration' and 'ICT services exports'.
  - 2nd rank in 'FTTH/Building Internet subscriptions', 'Mobile broadband internet traffic within the country' and 'International Internet bandwidth', 3rd rank in 'Domestic market scale'.
  - 4th rank in 'annual investment in telecommunication services'.
- ❖ India has ranked 2nd in the group of lower-middle-income countries after Vietnam.

### About the index:

- ❖ It maps the network-based readiness landscape of 133 economies based on their performances in four different pillars: Technology, People, Governance, and Impact, covering a total of 54 variables.

- ❖ The report has been published by the Portulans Institute, an independent non-profit research and educational institute based in Washington DC.
- ❖ Top three countries in the index: United States (1st), Singapore (2nd) and Finland (3rd).

### News in Short

- ❖ Bihar's second glass bridge after Rajgir will be developed at Matsyagandha Lake in Saharsha district.
- ❖ According to Union Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh:
  - The Union government is aiming to increase the turnover of the country's textile industry to 350 billion dollars by the year 2030.
- ❖ Gujarat is at first position in installations of Rooftop Solar System under PM-Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.
- ❖ Dr Jaiteerth Raghavendra Joshi has been appointed as the new chief of BrahMos Aerospace.



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