

Britannia NutriChoice launches health monitoring app NutriPlus in India



Key point

- ❖ In a bid to deepen engagement with consumers, biscuit brand Britannia NutriChoice has launched the health-tech app 'NutriPlus'.
- ❖ The app has been designed in partnership with Aktivo Labs, and enables monitoring of health and wellness metrics.
- ❖ The NutriPlus app harnesses evidence-based technology and has been built with an aim to democratize health monitoring in the country.
- ❖ Quantified health empowers people across cultures, languages, and geographies to live long and healthy Lives.

Romania unveils World's most Powerful Laser



Key point

- ❖ A research centre in Romania has recently unveiled "the world's most powerful laser", which is based on the inventions of 2018 Nobel Physics Prize winners Gerard Mourou and Donna Strickland.
- ❖ The laser, as per the Romanian research centre, is expected to revolutionize everything from the health sector to space exploration.
- ❖ The laser at the research centre, situated near the Romanian capital Bucharest, is operated by the French company Thales, using Nobel prize-winning inventions.
- ❖ France's Gerard Mourou and Donna Strickland of Canada won the 2018 Nobel Physics Prize for harnessing the power of lasers for advanced precision

instruments in corrective eye surgery and industry.

About Romania

- ❖ Capital- Bucharest
- ❖ Currency – Romanian Leu
- ❖ Official language- Romanian
- ❖ Continent- Europe

Ajit Doval leads the Indian delegation at SCO Meeting



Key point

- ❖ The Indian National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval led the Indian delegation at the meeting of the Secretaries of the Security Councils of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
- ❖ The 19th annual meeting of the secretaries of the security councils of the SCO member states was held in Astana, Kazakhstan.

- ❖ He also met Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, the current Chairman of SCO.
- ❖ President Tokayev advocated adopting a Cooperation Programme to counter terrorism, separatism, and extremism for 2025-2027 and the SCO Anti-Drug Strategy for 2024-2029.
- ❖ Previous SCO Summit Venue
- ❖ SCO Summit 2022 – Samarkand, Uzbekistan.
- ❖ SCO Summit 2023 – India
- ❖ SCO Summit 2024 – Astana, Kazakhstan

Japan launches e-Visa for Indian Tourists



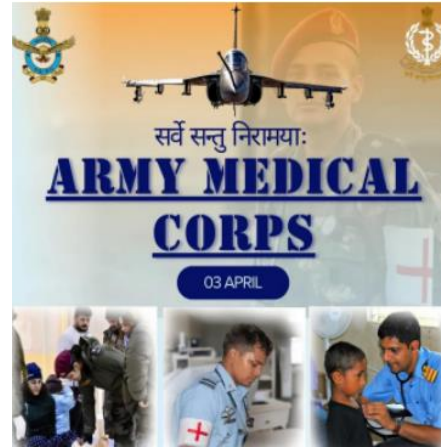
Key point

- ❖ Japan has officially launched its e-Visa program for several countries, including India.
- ❖ This single-entry visa grants a validity of up to 90 days and is specifically designed for travellers planning to enter Japan by air and holding an ordinary passport.
- ❖ For individuals seeking short-term tourism in Japan, the process of obtaining a visa has been streamlined through the introduction of electronic visas (e-Visas) via the Japan e-Visa system.

Who is Eligible

- ❖ The following countries and regions are eligible: Australia, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA.
- ❖ The eligibility also extends to Indian citizens and foreign nationals residing in India.
- ❖ Residents of these countries or regions, excluding those exempt from short-term visas, can apply for an e-Visa via the Japan e-Visa website.

Army Medical Corps celebrates 260th Raising Day



Key point

- ❖ The Army Medical Corps (AMC) marked its 260th Raising Day on April 3, 2024, commemorating a significant milestone in its history.
- ❖ The Army Medical Corps was established in the year 1764. The Army Medical Corps has rendered selfless service to the nation through progress, development, dedication and sacrifice over the centuries, both in times of war and peace.
- ❖ The Corps' motto is 'Sarve Santu Niramaya' meaning 'let all be free from disease'.

NATO celebrates 75 Years of collective defense



Key point

- ❖ The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has celebrated the anniversary of its establishment on April 4.
- ❖ On this day in 1949, western nations gathered in Washington, DC, to commit their nations to one another's defence.
- ❖ Key areas of focus for NATO's 75th anniversary are recommitting to the alliance's core values of democracy, freedom and rule of law, addressing evolving security challenges like Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and charting the course for NATO's future adaptation.
- ❖ NATO is a Western security alliance founded on April 4, 1949, with 12 founding members – Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States.
- ❖ They signed the Washington Treaty, which gets its power from Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, “which reaffirms the inherent right of independent states to individual or collective defence.”
- ❖ At the very heart of the alliance is the concept of “collective security” – an attack on any of the members is seen as an attack on all of them and demands collective action.
- ❖ Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, on collective security, was added “to counter the risk that the Soviet Union would seek to extend its control of Eastern Europe to other parts of the continent.” The USSR also aimed to shore up allies and in 1955, the Warsaw Pact was constituted as an alliance of socialist countries.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- ❖ Founded – 1949
- ❖ Headquarters – Brussels, Belgium
- ❖ Secretary General – Jens Stoltenberg
- ❖ Member countries – 32 (Last Sweden)
- ❖ Founding Members – United States, Canada, and ten European countries, including Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.
- ❖ NATO is a military alliance between North American and European countries.

Botswana threatened to send 20,000 elephants to Germany



Key point

- ❖ Botswana's President Mokgweetsi Masisi on Wednesday (April 3)

threatened to send 20,000 elephants to Germany. The statement came after Germany, earlier this year, proposed to enact stricter limits on the import of trophies from hunting animals.

- ❖ In an interview with German tabloid Bild, President Masisi said such a move by Germany — one of the largest importers of hunting trophies in the European Union — would impoverish people in his country. He also said that hunting helped curb the skyrocketing number of elephants in Botswana, home to around the world's largest elephant population (roughly 1.3 lakh).

But first, why are there so many elephants in Botswana?

- ❖ Botswana also implemented strict conservation policies. When poaching incidents were on a rise in 2013, it announced a 'shoot-to-kill' policy targeting suspected poachers. The next year, the country also imposed a ban on trophy hunting — hunting that previously took place under an official government licence.

- ❖ For these reasons, the elephant population in the country has steadily increased over the years. While in the early 1960s, there were fewer than 10,000 elephants in the country, by the mid-1990s, the population had touched 80,000, according to a report by Conservation Frontlines, an environmental conservation organisation.

Why have elephants become an issue for Botswana?

- ❖ Today, elephants inhabit about 40% of Botswana's land.
- ❖ Botswana's rising elephant population has led to a spike in human-animal conflict. Media reports suggest that the animal has become a menace for the country's rural communities, regularly damaging homes, drinking water from pipes, feeding on or destroying crops, and trampling people and cattle to death.
- ❖ A large population of elephants also threatens other species, and leads to significant biodiversity loss and habitat degradation — elephants tear down trees for fodder and consume

large amounts of water, which can cause a decline in non-elephant wildlife.

So, is hunting the only solution?

- ❖ In an effort to deal with the problem, Botswana has donated elephants to other countries. Last year, it gave away around 8,000 elephants to neighbouring Angola and, in 2022, it donated 500 elephants to Mozambique. The exercise, however, has not really made a dent in the animal population.
- ❖ With more than one lakh elephants in Botswana, Contraception is also not an option.
- ❖ This is why the country lifted its ban on trophy hunting in 2019. Botswana has argued that it not only helps limit the number of elephants, but also boosts the local economy with hunters, often from other countries, paying much as \$50,000 for each elephant killed.
- ❖ Botswana's government said the practice brought \$5million to local communities in 2021, according to a report by Morning Brew — and there

is a scope to make even more money. “Trophy hunters injected \$250 million into South Africa’s economy yearly and supported 17,000 jobs, according to one estimate in 2018,” the report said.

- ❖ Authorities have also argued that regulated trophy hunting ultimately helps the species that hunters target.
- ❖ Governments can use rich hunters’ money for conservation, and share profits with local communities, which can prevent habitat loss and better protect animals.
- ❖ Western countries and animal rights advocates, however, deem the practice to be unethical, responsible for exacerbating population decline of imperilled species. “Trophy hunters prefer to kill the largest, strongest animals, whose loss causes population declines,” conservation group

Humane Society International’s (HSI’s) website states.

- ❖ Furthermore, their contribution to the economy might also be overstated. “In eight key African countries, trophy hunters contribute at most 0.03 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) and at most 0.76 percent of overall tourism jobs,” the HSI claims. Lastly, many allege that local communities do not benefit from trophy hunting as advertised due to rampant corruption.

World Elephant Day,

- ❖ observed globally on August 12. Elephant is the Natural Heritage Animal of India.
- ❖ India has the largest number of wild Asian Elephants, estimated at 29,964 according to the 2017 census by Project Elephant.
- ❖ Asian Elephant (*Elephas maximus*) – Endangered.

