

International

Pak begins its two-year tenure as a non-permanent member of the UNSC

About News:-



- ❖ Pakistan began its two-year tenure as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on January 1, 2025, with Ambassador Munir Akram saying that the Pakistani delegation will play an “active and constructive” role in addressing the world's key challenges.

Key Points:-

- ❖ From Wednesday, Pakistan will sit in the Security Council for the 2025-26 term as a non-permanent member the eighth time the country has had a seat on the 15-member body's horseshoe table.
- ❖ Pakistan was elected as a non-permanent council member with a whopping number in June 2024, getting 182 votes in the 193-member General Assembly. A country requires 124 votes representing a two-thirds majority.
- ❖ Pakistan succeeded Japan as the Asian representative in the Security Council, which serves as the principal body for preserving global peace and security.
- ❖ Pakistan previously served on the council seven times in the past -- 2012-13, 2003-04, 1993-94, 1983-84, 1976-77, 1968-69 and 1952-53.
- ❖ During the General Assembly elections in June, Pakistan secured membership alongside Denmark, Greece, Panama, and Somalia. These nations will replace Japan, Ecuador, Malta, Mozambique, and Switzerland when their terms conclude on December 31, 2024.

- ❖ The incoming members will work with the permanent members possessing veto power - the United States, Russia, China, United Kingdom, and France as well as the non-permanent members elected last year: Algeria, Guyana, South Korea, Sierra Leone, and Slovenia.

About Pakistan:-

- ❖ Capital:- Islamabad
- ❖ Currency:- Pakistani rupee
- ❖ President:- Asif Ali Zardari
- ❖ Prime Minister:- Shehbaz Sharif

National

Country's first-ever 'Coastline-Waders Bird Census' to be conducted in Jamnagar from January 3 to 5

About News:-

- ❖ For the first time in India, a census of coastal and Wader birds will be conducted at the Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary in Jamnagar from January 3 to January 5, 2025.

Key Points:-

- ❖ Jamnagar, often regarded as a paradise for coastal birds, will host this significant event focusing on counting wader and coastal bird species.



- ❖ The three-day program will feature expert talks by specialists in forestry and wildlife on the first day, bird counting activities on the second day, and knowledge-sharing sessions followed by a closing ceremony on the final day.

- ❖ Bird enthusiasts, experts, and researchers from Gujarat and across the country are expected to participate in this landmark initiative.
- ❖ Gujarat is globally recognized for its rich biodiversity. Under the guidance of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Forest and Environment Minister Mulubhai Bera, and State Minister Mukeshbhai Patel, the Forest Department has implemented notable initiatives for environmental and aquatic life conservation, establishing Gujarat's unique identity in forestry and environmental protection nationwide.
- ❖ According to the release, this program is a joint effort by the Forest Department and the Bird Conservation Society of Gujarat (BCSG). Active for over 25 years, BCSG is a voluntary organization dedicated to bird conservation, census activities, observation, and raising public awareness about avian science through various initiatives.
- ❖ The Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary in Gujarat is India's first designated marine national park. Spanning the districts of Devbhoomi Dwarka, Jamnagar, and Morbi, it covers approximately 170 km of coastline and 42 islands between Okha and Navlakhi.
- ❖ Located in the Gulf of Kutch, this protected area was established to conserve marine biodiversity and mangrove ecosystems. Uniquely, this is the only place in India where visitors can explore marine life on foot during low tide, unlike other locations where scuba diving is required.

State

Arvind Kejriwal announces Pujari Granthi Samman Yojana

About News:-

- ❖ The Delhi Government on Tuesday announced the official launch of the registration process for the 'Pujari Granthi Samman' scheme, aimed at financially supporting Gurudwara priests.

Key Points:-

- ❖ An announcement regarding the launch of the scheme was made by former Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal on Monday, December 30.
- ❖ The scheme offers a monthly grant of Rs 18,000 to every temple and Gurudwara priest in Delhi.
- ❖ "Today, the scheme was launched by Arvind Kejriwal at the Hanuman temple in Connaught Place. The registration process for the scheme also began today at Sant Sujan Singh ji Maharaj's Gurdwara," Delhi Chief Minister Atishi told reporters.
- ❖ She further said the importance of the initiative, noting that the Granthis (Gurudwara priests) had expressed appreciation for the scheme, calling it a major step forward.
- ❖ "The Granthis said that this is probably the first government after Maharaja Ranjit Singh's government that is worried for the Granthis," Atishi added, highlighting the historic nature of this move.
- ❖ The scheme aims to provide financial security and recognition to religious leaders who serve in temples and Gurudwaras.



About Delhi:-

- ❖ Capital:- New Delhi
- ❖ Lt. Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena
- ❖ Chief Minister:- Atishi Marlena (AAP)

Maharashtra

MBMC Launches 'Faral Sakhi' Initiative in Partnership with NITI Aayog's WEP to Empower Women Entrepreneurs

About News:-



- ❖ The Mira Bhayandar Municipal Corporation (MBMC) has conceptualized a flagship initiative called 'Faral Sakhi', aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs in the city of Mira Bhayandar, Maharashtra. The program will provide comprehensive training and support to help women entrepreneurs engaged in traditional snack production to scale their ventures sustainably and effectively. MBMC collaborated with the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) of NITI Aayog and formally launched 'Faral Sakhi' under the Award to Reward initiative of WEP.

Key Points:-

- ❖ The 'Faral Sakhi' initiative aims at creating permanent employment opportunities for women by engaging them in the production and sale of traditional festive snacks ('Faral'). A central kitchen, set up by MBMC, enables women from self-help groups (SHGs) to prepare these snacks professionally.
- ❖ MBMC further supports these women by providing sales spaces and promoting their products through municipal advertisements. During the Diwali season, the initiative achieved remarkable success, selling over 3 tons of snacks due to their superior quality and taste.
- ❖ 25 women from Mira Bhayandar will be selected for technical training in business operations. This training, facilitated by the Centre for Education, Governance, and Public Policy (CEGP Foundation), will equip participants with the skills and knowledge needed to establish sustainable businesses and contribute to the local economy.
- ❖ WEP provides a forum for all ecosystem stakeholders across government, business, philanthropy, and civil society to collaborate, converge, and align their initiatives toward scalable, sustainable, and effective programs, enabling a larger impact for women entrepreneurs.

- ❖ In 2023, WEP took a decisive step towards institutionalizing the partnership with the launch of the Award to Reward programme under which stakeholders come together to meet the specific needs of women entrepreneurs and also felicitate the successes. The 'Award to Reward' initiative under WEP offers a plug-and-play framework for stakeholders to develop impactful programs.
- ❖ This collaboration focuses on enabling women entrepreneurs to succeed in domestic markets and scale their businesses internationally. With over 30,000 women entrepreneurs already engaged with WEP, this partnership with MBMC aims to create a thriving ecosystem for women-led businesses in Mira Bhayandar. WEP partner Appreciate will also provide financial support for this ATR.

About Maharashtra:-

- ❖ Capital:- Mumbai
- ❖ Governor:- C. P. Radhakrishnan
- ❖ Chief Minister:- Devendra Fadnavis

Economic

India's share of global trade in textiles and apparel stands at 3.9%

About News:-

- ❖ India is the 6th largest exporter of Textiles & Apparel in the world in 2023. The share of textile and apparel (T&A) including handicrafts in India's total exports stands at a significant 8.21% in 2023-24.



- ❖ Our country has a share of 3.9% of the global trade in textiles and apparel. Major textile and apparel export destinations for India are the USA and EU with around 47% share in total textile and apparel exports.

Key Points:-

- ❖ India is a major textile and apparel exporting country and enjoys a trade surplus. The bulk of import takes place for re-export or industry requirements of raw material.
- ❖ It is noteworthy that export is a function of demand and supply and depends on factors such as global demand, internal consumption and demand, order flow, logistics, etc. Exports are also affected by many geopolitical situations (such as the Red Sea crisis, Bangladesh crisis, etc.).
- ❖ Export in FY 2024 was initially low mainly due to the geopolitical crises around the Red Sea, which affected export movement during January, February, and March 2024.
- ❖ The overall export of Textiles & Apparel (incl. handicrafts) marked a growth of 7% during the October period of FY 2024-25 (\$ 21,358 Mn) compared to the same period of FY 2023-24 (\$ 20,007 Mn).
- ❖ Ready Made Garments (RMG) category with exports of \$ 8,733 Mn has the largest share (41%) in the total exports (\$ 21,358 Mn) during the period of April-October of FY 2024-25, followed by Cotton Textiles (33%, \$ 7,082 Mn), Man- Made Textiles (15%, \$ 3,105 Mn).
- ❖ Growth of exports is observed in all principal commodities during the period of April-October of FY 2024-25 compared to the corresponding period of FY 2023-24, except wool and handloom which declined by 19% and 6% respectively.
- ❖ Import of textiles and apparel products by India during FY 2023-24 (\$ 8,946 Mn) has decreased by approximately 15% in comparison to FY 2022-23 (\$10,481 Mn).
- ❖ The overall import of Textiles & Apparel (incl. handicrafts) decline 1% during April-October period of FY 2024-25 (\$ 5,425 Mn) compared to the same period of FY 2023-24 (\$ 5,464 Mn)

- ❖ The Man-made Textiles category with imports of \$1859 Mn has the largest share (34%) in the total imports (\$ 5,425 Mn) during the period of April-October of FY 2024-25, as there is a demand-supply gap in this sector.
- ❖ Growth of imports is observed majorly in Cotton Textiles mainly on account of the import of long-staple cotton fiber and such trends of import indicate an increase in the production capacity of the country amidst rising consumption and self-reliance.

Science & Technology

ISRO's US satellite launch to enable direct smartphone calls from space

About News:-

- ❖ India will lead a historic American communications satellite that is set to revolutionize mobile communication by having direct phone calls from space. For the first time, an American company utilizes an Indian rocket to launch such a huge satellite, which forms a new milestone in India's growing significance in the global space industry.



Key Points:-

- ❖ Such a satellite is being developed by AST SpaceMobile of Texas. Users, therefore, are going to make voice calls with their mobile phones using no extra equipment. That is different from anything else in the mainstream satellite communication services sought to fill the global connectivity gap in remote and underserved areas.

- ❖ Going by India's sound space infrastructure thanks to ISRO it is also perceived to take this global mobile communication that much further along with spreading broadband services up to billions on Earth. However, this does prove to be an ever-growing relationship and cooperation, intercontinental relationships and cooperation regarding the same.

First US satellite to be launched from India

- ❖ This would be the first instance in history where an American company launched a communication satellite of its size and capacity from India. Since India launched its first communication satellites, India also launched a handful of small communication satellites produced by American companies, but here launching a communication satellite of that kind and a large technological caliber is to emerge.

AST SpaceMobile revolutionises satellite communication with seamless phone connectivity

- ❖ It brings out a game-changing approach to communication through satellites from AST SpaceMobile. Unlike many other satellite operators, such as Starlink, it requires a special terminal or satellite phone setup to access these services. For AST SpaceMobile, the new technology will connect users directly via their regular phones without the need to use any additional equipment or a special service plan that is sometimes required by communications systems based on satellites.

Characteristics of Bluebird satellite

- ❖ The Bluebird satellite is a communication satellite of immense size, carrying a 64-square-meter antenna that is almost half the size of a regular football field. It will weigh about 6,000 kilograms and be launched into low Earth orbit for consistent service. The rocket GSLV belonging to India will be used to launch the Bluebird satellite into space with the rocket having a high level of reliability and having been successfully launched many times.

Award

Sai Paranjpye to be honoured with Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award at Ajanta-Ellora Film Festival



About News:-

- ❖ Veteran director-writer Sai Paranjpye, known for slice-of-life films such as "Sparsh", "Chashme Buddoor", "Katha", and "Saaz", will receive the Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award at the Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival (AIFF) 2025.
- ❖ The 10th edition of the film gala is scheduled to be held in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar from January 15 to January 19.
- ❖ AIFF chairman Nandkishor Kagliwal, chief mentor Ankushrao Kadam, and honorary chairman of AIFF, director Ashutosh Gowariker announced on Tuesday.

Obituary

Bengali film director Arun Roy dies at age 56

About News:-

- ❖ Bengali filmmaker Arun Roy, known for his critically acclaimed works Bagha Jatin (2023) and Hiralal (2021), passed away on Thursday morning after a prolonged battle with cancer. The director, 56, succumbed to a severe lung infection while receiving treatment at R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.
- ❖ Arun Roy, whose real name was Arunava Raychaudhuri, made a notable debut with Hiralal, which gained widespread acclaim for its gripping storytelling and memorable performances.
- ❖ The film featured Dr Kinjal Nanda in the lead role. Roy's follow-up film, 8/12 Binoy Badal Dinesh (2022), reinforced his ability to bring historical and patriotic narratives to life.



Important Day

World Braille Day – 04 Jan

About Day:-

- ❖ World Braille Day, observed on January 4th, commemorates the birthday of Louis Braille, the visionary who developed a tactile script that revolutionized communication for blind and partially sighted individuals.
- ❖ Celebrated globally since 2019, this day highlights the significance of Braille in empowering visually impaired individuals to access education, information, and opportunities, fostering their full participation in society.

About International Braille Day

- ❖ Establishment: It was established by the UN General Assembly in 2018 to commemorate the birth anniversary of French educator Louis Braille, the inventor of the Braille language.

- ❖ He invented a tactile system of reading and writing for the blind and visually impaired in 1824. Objective: To raise awareness of the importance of Braille as a means of communication for blind and partially sighted people.
- ❖ A Representation System: Braille is a tactile representation of alphabetic and numerical symbols using six dots to represent each letter and number, and even musical, mathematical, and scientific symbols. Significance: Braille is essential in education, freedom of expression and opinion, and social inclusion, as reflected in Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- ❖ The first Braille system was published in 1829 and was adopted by the National Institute for Blind Youth.
- ❖ Kerala Federation of the Blind started the first Braille printing press in 1986.

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