

19 August 2024

Sumit Antil & Bhagyashri Jadhav: 2024  
Paris Paralympics Flag Bearer



### Key Points:

- ❖ The Paralympic Committee of India has named Tokyo Paralympics gold medallist para-athletes Sumit Antil and Shot Putter Bhagyashri Jadhav as the Indian flag bearers for the opening ceremony of the 2024 Paris Paralympics Games, which will be held on 28 August 2024.
- ❖ The 17th Summer Paralympics for disabled athletes will take place in Paris, France, from 28 August to 8 September 2024.
- ❖ The International Paralympics Committee organises the Summer and Winter Paralympics games. Since the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, the Paralympics have been held shortly after the conclusion of the Summer Olympics.
- ❖ The 33rd Summer Olympics ended on 11 August 2024 in Paris.
- ❖ Like the Olympics, the opening and closing ceremonies of the Paralympics Games involve two flag bearers—one male and one female.
- ❖ Para-athlete Sumit Antil and Bhagyashri Jadhav will be the flag bearers at the opening ceremony of the 2024 Paris Paralympics.
- ❖ 25-year-old World Champion Sumit Antill won a gold medal in the javelin throw at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics in the men's F64 category.
- ❖ Sumit also holds the world record in the category. 39-year-old Bhagyashri Jadhav is a silver medallist in the women's shot put event in the F34 category at the Asian Para Games.
- ❖ She has also won a silver medal in women's F34 shot put at the World Para Athletics Championships in May 2024.
- ❖ Before the Paris Paralympics, India competed in the 11 edition of the Summer Paralympics.
- ❖ The first Summer Paralympic Games was held in the Italian capital city of Rome in 1960.
- ❖ The Indian contingent consists of 84 athletes, including 32 women athletes.
- ❖ It is the largest contingent of Indian athletes to participate in a Summer Paralympics edition. Indian athletes will compete in 12 sporting events, including para-cycling, para-rowing,

and blind judo, which they will be participating in for the first time.

- ❖ A total of 22 sports will be held at the Paris Paralympics

### Indian Coast Guard Director-General Rakesh Pal dies in Chennai



#### Key Points:

- ❖ Indian Coast Guard chief Rakesh Pal died of a cardiac arrest in Chennai today.
- ❖ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in his condolence message said Director General Pal was "an able and committed officer".
- ❖ "Deeply saddened at the untimely demise of Rakesh Pal, DG, Indian Coast Guard (ICG) in Chennai today.
- ❖ He was an able and committed officer under whose leadership ICG was making big strides in strengthening India's maritime security.
- ❖ My heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family," Mr Singh said. Rakesh Pal had taken charge as the 25th Director General of the ICG on July 19 last year.
- ❖ He was scheduled to meet the Defence Minister at an ICG event, but was

admitted to Rajiv Gandhi General Hospital earlier in the day after he complained of uneasiness, officials said.

- ❖ In his distinguished career spanning over 34 years, the Flag Officer had held several key appointments on the sea and ashore.
- ❖ Prominent among them were the Commander of Coast Guard Region (North West), Deputy Director General (Policy and Plans), and Additional Director General at Coast Guard Headquarters in Delhi.
- ❖ He also held various prestigious staff assignments namely Director (Infra and Works) and Principal Director (Administration) at Coast Guard headquarters.

#### ABOUT INDIAN COAST GUARD



- ❖ ICG was established in August 1978 by the Coast Guard Act, 1978 as an independent Armed force of India.
- ❖ As the fourth largest Coast Guard in the world, it has played a significant role in securing the Indian coasts and

enforcing regulations in the maritime zones of India.

- ❖ It is an Armed Force, Search and Rescue and Maritime Law Enforcement agency under the Ministry of Defence.
- ❖ It is headquartered in New Delhi. The concept of forming ICG came into being after the 1971 war.

**Paetongtarn Shinawatra becomes new PM of Thailand**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ The Thai Parliament voted to make Paetongtarn Shinawatra the next as well as the youngest-ever prime minister of Thailand.
- ❖ Paetongtarn succeeds Srettha Thavisin, who was removed from his post by a constitutional court ruling.
- ❖ The parliament confirmed the nomination of Paetongtarn, 37, by the ruling coalition of her Pheu Thai party.
- ❖ Thai and its partners hold 314 seats in parliament, and Paetongtarn needed the approval of more than half of the current 493 lawmakers to become prime minister.

**P Harish appointed as India's Permanent Representative to United Nations**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ The Ministry of External Affairs has appointed seasoned diplomat Parvathaneni Harish as India's next Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York.
- ❖ Harish, a 1990-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, is presently serving as India's ambassador to Germany.
- ❖ The position of India's ambassador or permanent representative to the UN has been lying vacant after Ruchira Kamboj retired in June.

**About United Nations (UN)**

- ❖ Founded - 24 October 1945
- ❖ Headquarters - New York, US
- ❖ Official languages - Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian & Spanish
- ❖ Membership - 193 members (193 rd South Sudan)
- ❖ 1st Secretary General - Trygve Halvdan Lie (Norway)
- ❖ 9th Secretary-General - António Guterres (Portugal)
- ❖ Deputy Secretary-General - Amina J. Mohammed (Nigeria)

- ❖ India's Permanent Representative to UN - Parvathaneni Harish (replace Ruchira Kamboj)
- ❖ United Nations Day is celebrated on October 24 every year

**Govind Mohan appointed as new Home Secretary**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has appointed 1989-Sikkim cadre IAS officer Govind Mohan as the next Home Secretary.
- ❖ Mohan will replace Ajay Kumar Bhalla upon completion of his tenure on August 22. Mohan is currently posted as Secretary in the Ministry of Culture. Bhalla, a 1984-batch IAS officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, was appointed as Home Secretary in August 2019.
- ❖ Mohan, who holds an electrical engineering degree from BHU-IIT Varanasi, has served as Union Culture Secretary since October 2021 and had two stints in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in the past.

**President Droupadi Murmu approves 103 Gallantry Awards for Armed Forces and CAPFs**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu has approved 103 Gallantry awards to Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces personnel on the eve of Independence Day.
- ❖ These are four Kirti Chakras including three posthumous, 18 Shaurya Chakras including four posthumous and one Bar to Sena Medal (Gallantry).
- ❖ Among the Gallantry awards are 63 Sena Medals (Gallantry) including two posthumous, 11 Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry) and six Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry).

**Gus Atkinson and Chamari Athapaththu crowned as Player of the month award for July 2024**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ The International Cricket Council (ICC) has revealed the recipients of the ICC Players of the Month awards for July 2024.
- ❖ England's Gus Atkinson and Sri Lanka's Chamari Athapaththu have been crowned as the standout performers in men's and women's cricket, respectively, for their exceptional contributions to the sport during the month.

**Odisha to bring five Royal Bengal tigers from Maharashtra, MP by September**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ To bolster big cat population in Odisha, forest officials have begun the process of relocating five Royal Bengal Tigers from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, with the transfer scheduled to be completed in September.
- ❖ According to Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF)-Wildlife, Susanta Nanda, three of these tigers will be released into the Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary in Sambalpur, while the remaining two will be introduced into the Similipal Tiger Reserve in Mayurbhanj.

- ❖ In its latest tiger estimation conducted for the first time during 2023-24 in 47 forest divisions of Odisha, 30 tigers and eight cubs were found. Out of the 30 Royal Bengal Tigers, 27 were found in the Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR), while Keonjhar territorial and Keonjhar wildlife, Paralakhemundi territorial, and Hirakud wildlife had one tiger each. The PCCF also said that the Nandankanan Zoological Park is all set to welcome two giraffes by the end of this month.

**Renowned DRDO scientist Ram Narain Agarwal dies at 83**



**Key Points:**

- ❖ Renowned Indian scientist Dr Ram Narain Agarwal, a pivotal figure in the development of India's missile system, died at the age of 84.
- ❖ Known as the 'Father of Agni Missiles', Dr Agarwal played a key role in defence research and in the development of India's long-range ballistic missile program, particularly the Agni series of missiles.
- ❖ The Agni missile was the most ambitious of the five missiles sought to be developed under the

Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme launched in 1983 by the Government of India. The others were Prithvi, Akash, Nag, and Trishul.

**Delhi Airport 1st In Country To Get 'Net Zero Carbon Emission' Status**

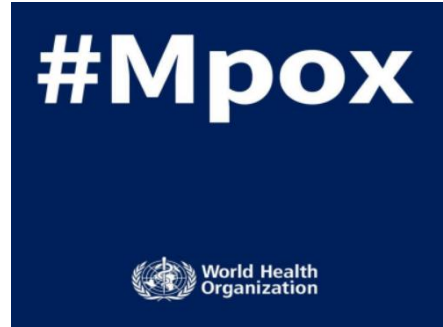


**Key Points:**

- ❖ Delhi's IGI Airport has become the first Indian airport to achieve the status of 'Net Zero Carbon Emission Airport' (Level 5 certification) under the Airport Carbon Accreditation (ACA) programme of Airport Council International (ACI). Achieving carbon-neutral status in 2016 and level 4+ transition accreditation in 2020 were only the beginning.
- ❖ Achieving the level five net-zero emission accreditation in 2024, we have once again demonstrated our commitment to continuous improvement and green initiatives.'
- ❖ Initially the airport had set a target of achieving a net zero carbon emission by 2030.
- ❖ But through various measures including use of renewable energy,

promotion of electric vehicles and development of infrastructure for a green airport, DIAL achieved its target ahead of schedule.

**Mpox declared a global health emergency: will it trigger another pandemic?**



- ❖ The World Health Organization has declared the ongoing outbreaks of mpox in Congo and elsewhere in Africa to be a global emergency, requiring urgent action to curb the virus' transmission.
- ❖ Sweden has since announced it had found the first case of a new form of mpox previously only seen in Africa in a traveler, while other European health authorities warned more imported cases were likely.
- ❖ Is mpox going to trigger another pandemic? That seems highly unlikely.
- ❖ Pandemics, including the most recent ones of swine flu and COVID-19, are typically sparked by airborne viruses that spread quickly, including by people who may not be showing symptoms. Mpox, also known as monkeypox, is spread primarily through close skin-to-

skin contact with infected people or their soiled clothes or bedsheets.

- ❖ It often causes visible skin lesions that could make people less likely to be in close contact with others.
- ❖ To stay safe, experts advise avoiding close physical contact with someone who has lesions resembling mpox, not sharing their utensils, clothing or bedsheets and maintaining good hygiene like regular hand-washing.

**How different is mpox from COVID-19?**

- ❖ Mpox spreads very slowly unlike the coronavirus.
- ❖ Shortly after the coronavirus was identified in China, the number of cases jumped exponentially from several hundred to several thousand; in a single week in January, the case count increased more than tenfold.
- ❖ By March 2020, when WHO described COVID-19 as a pandemic, there were more than 126,000 infections and 4,600 deaths — about three months after the coronavirus was first identified.
- ❖ In contrast, it's taken since 2022 for mpox cases to hit nearly 100,000 infections globally, with about 200 deaths, according to WHO. There are vaccines and treatments available for mpox unlike in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<b>About</b>	It is a viral infection caused by the monkeypox virus (MPXV). It was first reported in humans in 1970, predominantly in African regions.
<b>Types</b>	There are two known types (clades) of mpox virus a. Clade I– It originated in Central Africa b. Clade II– It originated in West Africa
<b>Symptoms</b>	Fever, headache, muscle aches, back pain, low energy, swollen lymph nodes, and pox-like rashes which last for about 2-3 weeks.
<b>Transmission</b>	It can spread from animals to humans (zoonotic transmission) or between humans (through direct contact with body fluids or sexual contact)

- ❖ Why has become Mpox ( MonkeyPox) Public Health Emergency of International Concern?
- ❖ **1.Discovery of New type/Clade (Clade Ib):** This new variant, Clade Ib, is spreading more through sexual contact, unlike previous strains that mainly spread through animal-to-human transmission.
- ❖ **2.Exponential increase in Spread:** Over 99,000 cases and 208 deaths have been reported globally since 2022. The virus has been mutating and diversifying, making it harder to control.
- ❖ **3.New areas of Geographic Spread:** New cases of Clade Ib have been reported in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda. These are the countries that previously did not have mpox cases.
- ❖ **Vaccines and Preventative Measures being taken**
  1. Two vaccines are recommended by WHO for mpox. WHO is working to ensure vaccines are available in low-income countries through emergency listings and partnerships.
  2. WHO and health experts emphasize the need for a coordinated global

response to prevent further spread and potential fatalities.

- ❖ PM Modi continuously monitoring the Mpox situation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been continuously monitoring the Mpox situation with the principal secretary Dr. P.K. Mishra directing that surveillance be enhanced and measures be taken for prompt detection of cases. He further

directed that the testing laboratories network should be geared up for early diagnosis. At present, 32 labs are equipped for testing.

- ❖ World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared Mpox a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) in view of its prevalence and spread across many parts of Africa



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