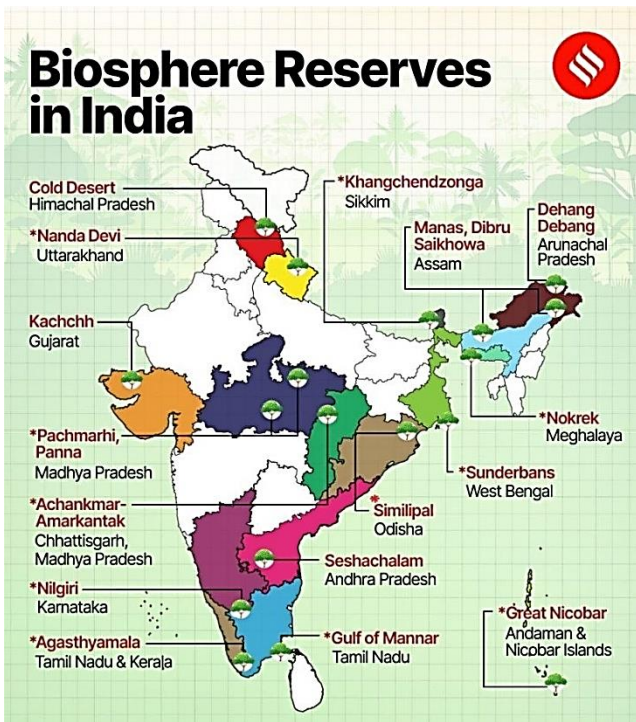


### UNESCO Designated 11 New Biosphere Reserves

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has designated 11 new Biosphere Reserves (BR) in 11 countries including 2 transboundary biosphere reserves.



#### Key Points

- ❖ Belgium and Gambia have been included in this list for the first time.
- ❖ With these new Biosphere Reserves, the World Biosphere Reserve Network has expanded to 759 sites in 136 countries. Which covers a total of 7,442,000 square kilometres.
- ❖ UNESCO has named natural areas as 'Biosphere Reserves' to reduce the conflict between development and conservation.

- ❖ These 11 new BRs were approved during the 36th session of the International Coordinating Council (ICC), the governing body of UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MAB) programme held in Agadir, Morocco

#### Newly added Biosphere Reserves -

S.No	Biosphere Reserve	Country
1.	Kempen-Broeck Transboundary Biosphere Reserve	Belgium, Kingdom of the Netherlands
2.	Darién Norte Chocono Biosphere Reserve	Colombia
3.	Madre de las Aguas Biosphere Reserve	Dominican Republic
4.	Numi Biosphere Reserve	Gambia
5.	Koli Eugenie Biosphere Reserve	Italy
6.	Julian Alps Transboundary Biosphere Reserve	Italy, Slovenia
7.	Khar Us Lake Biosphere Reserve	Mongolia
8.	Yapayaos Biosphere Reserve	Philippines

9.	Changnyeong Biosphere Reserve	Republic of Korea
10.	Val d'Aran Biosphere Reserve	Spain
11.	Irati Biosphere Reserve	Spain

**About United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO):**

- ❖ Director-General- Audrey Azoulay
- ❖ Headquarters- Paris, France
- ❖ Member Nations- 194 member states and 12 associate members
- ❖ Established-1945

**India Hosted the 6th EAS Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation in Mumbai**

India held the 6th East Asia Summit (EAS) Conference on Maritime Security Cooperation in Mumbai, Maharashtra, on July 4th and 5th, 2024. The Conference was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India (GoI), in collaboration with the governments of Australia and Indonesia.



**Key Points**

- ❖ The ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)-India Centre (AIC) at Research and Information System for

Developing Countries (RIS) and the National Maritime Foundation (NMF) collaborated as Knowledge Partners for the Conference.

- ❖ The conference featured six thematic sessions: the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) and ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP); regional maritime domain awareness; combating illicit maritime activity, anti-piracy, and illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing; maritime connectivity; and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) and search and rescue (SAR).

**Gaganyaan Astronauts Selected for Axiom-4 Mission**

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



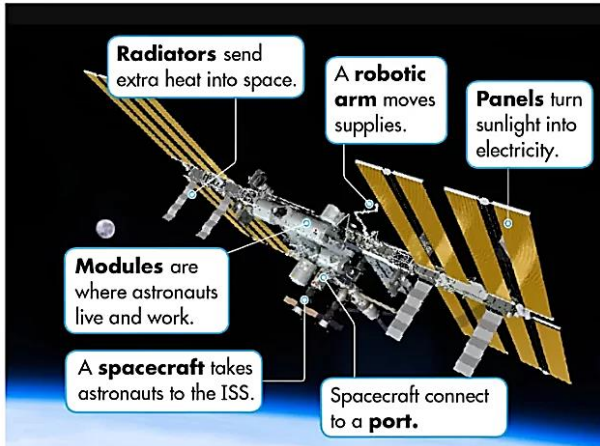
**Key Points**

- ❖ Only one of the shortlisted astronauts will go on the mission.
- ❖ The joint statement by India and the United States during Prime Minister's visit in 2023 said NASA would

provide 'advanced training' to Indian astronauts at one of its facilities, as part of the Artemis Accords.

### About International Space Station

- ❖ ISS: It is a multi-nation construction project and its main construction was completed between 1998 and 2011.



- ❖ According to the European Space Agency (ESA), it is a co-operative programme between Europe, United States, Russia, Canada and Japan.
- ❖ Orbit: The space station orbits in Low Earth orbit (LEO) at an altitude of approximately 430 kilometers, with its orbital path taking it over 90% of the Earth's population.

### 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.

### Rajasthan to Become 1st State to Adopt a Road Safety Action Plan for 10 Years

Rajasthan is going to become India's first state to implement a 10-year road safety action plan. The proposed action plan aims to reduce traffic accidents in the state by 50% by 2030.



### Key Points

- ❖ The World Bank (WB) would support the Government of Rajasthan in developing an action and safety plan that incorporates best practices from other nations.
- ❖ As per the draft, the action plan will be implemented in 3 phases. The phase 1 will be implemented between 2025 till 2027. It will focus on safety audits of 500 kilometer (km) of state highways and major district roads.

- ❖ The phase-2 of action plan will be implemented from 2027 till 2030 and will focus on the reduction of 50% of road accident fatalities which is in line with United Nations (UN)'s Second Decade of Action for Road Safety.
- ❖ The phase-3 of action plan will be implemented from 2030 till 2033 and will focus on the reduction of 75% of road accident fatalities.

**About Rajasthan:**

- ❖ Chief Minister (CM) – Bajan Lal Sharma
- ❖ Deputy CMs– Diya Kumari and Prem Chand Bairwa
- ❖ Governor– Kalraj Mishra
- ❖ National Parks (NPs)- Ranthambore National Park and Keoladeo National Park

**Vietnam Tops List of Most Affordable Countries for Expats**

According to InterNations' Expat Insider 2024 Survey, for the Personal Finance Index category, Vietnam topped the list of most affordable countries for expatriates or immigrants for the fourth consecutive year, with 86% of expats rating the cost of living positively, 65% satisfied with their financial situation, and 68% believing their household income was adequate for survival.



**Key Points**

- ❖ While India was ranked sixth among the top ten most cheap countries for immigrants on the list.
- ❖ Colombia, a Latin American country, has risen from seventh (in 2023) to second (2024), followed by Indonesia and Panama in third and fourth places, respectively.
- ❖ Among the top 10 countries in the rankings, 6 are from the Asia region: Vietnam(1st), Indonesia (3rd ), the Philippines (5th ), India (6th), Thailand(8th) and China (10th ) spot.
- ❖ For the 1st time, Brazil made it to top 10 affordable countries for expats by replacing Malaysia which slipped to 11th position in 2024 rankings.

Rank	Country
1st	Vietnam
2nd	Colombia
3rd	Indonesia
4th	Panama
5th	Philippines
6th	India

Important Daily Current Affairs Question

1. Which mission will take an Indian astronaut to the International Space Station (ISS)?
- (a) Artemis
  - (b) Voyager
  - (c) Axiom-4
  - (d) Apollo-11

Answer- (c)

2. Which Indian state is set to become the first to adopt a Road Safety Action Plan for a duration of 10 years?
- (a) Maharashtra
  - (b) Gujarat
  - (c) Rajasthan
  - (d) Karnataka

Answer- (c)

