

## Testwale Current Affairs PDF

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### **1. India, Panama sign agreement on cooperation in training diplomats ( Jan. 10, 2023 )**

India, Panama sign agreement on cooperation in training diplomats

External Affairs Minister **Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar** signed an MoU to enhance cooperation in the training of diplomats during his bilateral meeting with Panamanian Foreign Minister **Janaina Tevane Mencomo in Indore.**

#### **An overview of the news**

- The agreement was signed during the visit of the Foreign Minister of Panama to participate in the **17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** Conference.
- The visit of the Panamanian Foreign Minister to India comes more than a month after the two sides held the **2nd Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) in Panama City** on November 23, 2022.
- During the consultations, both sides comprehensively reviewed their bilateral relations covering issues such as trade and investment, pharmaceuticals, capacity building, space cooperation and consular.
- Both countries also discussed cooperation in **multilateral fora.**
- Both countries agreed to hold the next round of consultations at a mutually convenient date in **New Delhi.**

#### **About Panama**

- Panama is the southernmost nation in **Central America.**
- The country is known for the Panama Canal, a man-made waterway that opened in 1914. This canal passes through the country, connecting the **Caribbean Sea (Atlantic) with the Pacific Ocean.**
- Capital - **Panama City**
- Currency - **Balboa**
- President - **Laurentino Cortizo**

### **2. First meeting of Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion Working Group of G20 kicks off in Kolkata ( Jan. 10, 2023 )**

First meeting of Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion Working Group of G20 kicks off in Kolkata

The first '**Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion**' meeting of the G20 began in **Kolkata** on 9 January in the presence of **guests and dignitaries** from across the world.

**An overview of the news**

- The **three-day meet** will focus on principles of **digital financial inclusion, remittance costs and SME finance availability**.
- It began with a symposium followed by a session on the role of digital public infrastructure for enhancing digital financial services.
- **State Bank of India, GTX, UIDAI and NABARD** among others participated in the symposium highlighting India's digital innovations to further financial inclusion.
- The **G-20 delegates** visited the stalls at the symposium and discussed digital innovations and initiatives showcasing innovations for digital inclusion of the masses.
- UIDAI Chief Executive Officer (CEO) **Saurabh Garg** said, through this workshop, digital innovations can help in financial inclusion thereby helping in productivity gains.
- **Aadhaar, UPI, Trade Receivables, e-Sign or DigiLocker** showcased in the workshop to G20 countries.
- Its purpose is to exchange information so that people of different countries can be benefited.
- During the first month of the G20 presidency, meetings were held in **Udaipur, Mumbai and Bengaluru**.

**3. World's first vaccine for honeybees approved for use by United States ( Jan. 10, 2023 )**

The **US Department of Agriculture (USDA)** has approved the **world's first insect vaccine**, which has been developed to protect bees from a devastating bacterial disease.

**An overview of the news**

- US researchers have developed a vaccine to target a disease called **American foulbrood**.
- The disease is caused by **Paenibacillus larval bacteria** and once it reaches a bee population, it has the potential to completely destroy the colony.
- **Dalil Freitak** of the **University of Helsinki** and his colleagues discovered an important **egg yolk protein** called **vitellogenin**.
- This fundamental discovery laid the groundwork for a new type of insect vaccine, and the team's first target was honey bees.

**Effectiveness of vaccine**

- The vaccine works by binding to the **vitellogenin protein** in **inactivated bacterial cells** so that when consumed by the **queen bee** it can be transferred directly to her **larvae**.
- This vaccine is given to the queen bees in the form of **royal jelly**. She swallows it, and fragments of the vaccine get deposited in her **ovaries**.
- After exposure to the vaccine, **immunity develops** in the developing larvae.
- A successful clinical trial demonstrated that the vaccine is both **safe and effective**.
- **Progeny** from a vaccinated queen bee are much less likely to contract bacterial disease.

#### **4. New BIS specifications for TVs manufactured in India ( Jan. 9, 2023 )**

New BIS specifications for TVs manufactured in India

The **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)**, through its technical committee, has published an **Indian Standard Specification for televisions** with built-in satellite tuners. BIS has published **three significant Indian Standards** in the area of Electronics.

##### **The first standard**

- TVs manufactured as per this Indian standard will be able to receive **free-to-air TV and radio channels** by connecting a **dish antenna with the LNB mounted** at a suitable location on the roof top/side wall of the building.
- This will facilitate dissemination of **government initiatives**, schemes, Doordarshan's educational content and Indian cultural programs in the country and facilitate them to reach and benefit the population at large in the country.
- Currently, television (TV) viewers in the country are required to buy set-top boxes to watch various paid and free channels.
- Viewers are also required to use a set top box for free to air channels (non-encrypted) broadcast by Doordarshan.
- Now Doordarshan is starting the process of discontinuing analog broadcasting in a **phased manner**.
- Doordarshan will continue to broadcast free to air channels using **digital satellite transmission**.

##### **The second standard**

- The second standard is the Indian standard for **USB Type C receptacles, plugs and cables**.
- In this, the existing international standard **IEC 62680-1- 3:2022** is being adopted.

- This standard provides requirements for **USB Type-C ports, plugs and cables** for use in various electronic devices such as mobile phones, laptops, notebooks, etc.
- This standard will provide a common charging solution for smartphones and other electronic devices sold in the country.

### **The third Standard**

- The third standard is the Indian Standard for **Video Surveillance Systems**.
- The Bureau of **Indian Standards through its Technical Committee** on Alarm and Electronic Security Systems has developed a series of **Indian Standards (IS 16910)** on video surveillance systems for use in security applications.
- The **IS 16910 series** of standards is an adoption of the International Standard IEC 62676 series.
- **Video Surveillance System (VSS)** is an essential security component which is used almost everywhere to capture any unwanted activity.

### **About Bureau of Indian Standards**

- Bureau of Indian Standards is the national standards body of India under the **Department of Consumer Affairs**, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India.
- Headquarters- **Manak Bhawan, Old Delhi**
- Director General- **Pramod Kumar Tiwari**
- Established- **23 December 1986**

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## **6. New British Indian Army Memorial to be built in Scotland ( Jan. 9, 2023 )**

New British Indian Army Memorial to be built in Scotland

A new **British Indian Army memorial** has been approved to be built in the **Scottish city of Glasgow** to commemorate the **sacrifices of millions of Indian soldiers** who fought alongside the British during the **two world wars**.

### **An overview of the news**

- In this, the contribution of more than **40 lakh Indian soldiers** who fought on behalf of Britain in both the world wars will be shown.
- **Scotland**, the local council of Glasgow has approved plans to build a memorial. **Glaswegian City Council** is now making the final preparations to build the memorial.
- This war memorial will be built near an art gallery and museum named **Kelvingrove**.
- According to **Colourful Heritage**, the organisation that made the memorial, the diversity of India can also be shown through this memorial.
- Therefore, it will give information about the contribution of all the soldiers of **Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian** religions.
- The contribution of those Sikh and Muslim soldiers who participated in the **Second World War** will be specially shown in the memorial.

## **7. India identifies two lithium and one copper mine in Argentina ( Jan. 9, 2023 )**

India identifies two lithium and one copper mine in Argentina

Recently **India** has discovered **two lithium mines and one copper mine in Argentina** in the South America continent.

### **Overview of the news**

- The Center sent a team of **three geologists** in November last year to "assess potential lithium deposits" in the Latin American nation.
- The team included **one geologist each** from Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL), KABIL (Khanij Bidesh India Limited) and Geological Survey of India (GSI).
- **KABIL**, a joint venture set up through the participation of National Aluminum Company (NALCO), Hindustan Copper (HCL) and MECL, aims to ensure continuous supply of critical and strategic minerals to the domestic market.
- India formed '**Khanij Videsh India Limited**' in August 2019 for exploration of minerals in other countries; Which recently entered into an agreement with an Argentinian firm for the exploration of minerals like lithium.
- Lithium is used in rechargeable batteries. These batteries are used to power electric vehicles, laptops and mobile phones etc.

### **Mineral Videsh India Limited**

- It has been formed by three government companies NALCO, Hindustan Copper and Mineral Exploration Limited, through which minerals like lithium and cobalt can be purchased from abroad.

### **Production and storage of lithium in the world**

- **Australia** is currently the **top lithium producer globally**. While **Argentina is the fourth largest producing country** in the world.
- Together with Argentina, Chile and Bolivia, it forms the '**Lithium Triangle**'.
- Apart from the lithium triangle in the world, America and China are also its major producers.
- Presently India is dependent on imports for these minerals.

### **8. Luxury Cruise Ganga Vilas carrying Swiss tourists reaches Ghazipur in UP ( Jan. 8, 2023 )**

Luxury Cruise Ganga Vilas carrying Swiss tourists reaches Ghazipur in UP

The luxury Cruise **Ganga Vilas** carrying **Swiss tourists** on 7 January reached **Ghazipur in Uttar Pradesh**.

#### **An overview of the news**

- The tourists visited the famous places of Ghazipur including the **tomb of Lord Cornwallis**. The cruise reached Varanasi on 8 January.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will flag off Ganga Vilas, the world's longest river cruise, on **January 13**.
- The cruise will start from **Varanasi** in Uttar Pradesh and end at **Dibrugarh in Assam**.
- The journey will cover a distance of 3,200 km in 50 days and pass through 27 river systems in **India and Bangladesh**.
- The cruise will also pass through national parks and sanctuaries including **Sundarbans Delta and Kaziranga National Park**.

#### **World's longest river cruise Ganga Vilas**

- The length of the Ganga Vilas vessel is **62 metres and the width is 12 metres**.
- It has three decks, **18 suites** on board with a capacity of **36 passengers**, with all facilities for tourists.
- It is equipped with **pollution free** mechanisms and **noise control technologies**.

- The itinerary of Ganga Vilas has been conceptualised to showcase the rich heritage of India with stops at places of historical, cultural and religious importance.
- Ganga Vilas Cruises is the first cruise service of its kind.
- With the support of the **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)** under the Ministry of Shipping, Ports and Waterways, efforts are on to make this service a success in other parts.

### **The global River cruise market**

- The global river cruise market has grown at a rate of **~5%** over the past few years and is expected to account for **~37% by 2027**.
- **Europe** is the fastest growing with about **60% of river cruise ships** in the world.
- In India, **8 river cruise ships** operate between **Kolkata and Varanasi**, while cruise movement also operates on **National Waterway 2 (Brahmaputra)**.
- **10 passenger terminals** are under construction on NW2 which will further enhance the potential for river cruises.

### **9. India overtakes Japan to become third largest auto market globally ( Jan. 8, 2023 )**

According to the latest **Nikkei Asia industry data**, **India has overtaken Japan to become the third largest auto market** for the first time.

#### **An overview of the news**

- India's new vehicle sales were at least **4.25 million units**, ahead of the **4.2 million sold in Japan**, based on preliminary results.
- New vehicles delivered in India between January and November 2022 totaled **4.13 million**.
- In December 2022 sales volume the total comes to around **4.25 million units**.
- India sales volumes are expected to increase further with the inclusion of pending sales figures for the fourth quarter for commercial vehicles.
- Most of the new autos sold in India last year consisted of vehicles powered by **gasoline, including hybrid vehicles**.
- Along with **Maruti Suzuki, Tata Motors** and other Indian automakers have seen sales growth during the last year.
- According to **British research firm Euromonitor**, only **8.5 per cent** of Indian households own a passenger vehicle in 2021, which means there is considerable scope for growth in sales.



- According to data from the **Japan Automobile Dealers Association** and the **Japan Light Motor Vehicle and Motorcycle Association**, **4,201,321 vehicles** were sold in Japan last year, **down 5.6 percent from 2021**.

### **World's largest auto market**

- In 2021, **China topped the global auto market** with sales of 26.27 million vehicles.
- The **US stood second** with 15.4 million vehicles sold, followed by Japan with 4.44 million units.
- According to Nikkei Asia, China overtook Japan to become the second largest auto market **in 2006**.
- **In 2009**, China overtook the US to become the world's largest auto market.

### **10. Kevin McCarthy elected as new speaker of the US House of Representatives ( Jan. 7, 2023 )**

Kevin McCarthy elected as new speaker of the US House of Representatives

Republican leader **Kevin McCarthy** has been elected as the **speaker of the US House of Representatives**.

#### **An overview of the news**

- He was serving as the **House Minority Leader** in the House.
- The US Parliament has elected Kevin McCarthy of the Republican Party as the speaker of the House of Representatives after 15 rounds of voting. McCarthy is the **55th speaker of the US House of Representatives**.
- Kevin McCarthy, 57, has replaced **Nancy Pelosi**, 82, the leader of the **Democratic Party** in the House of Representatives.
- After the midterm elections held on November 8, the number of members of former President Donald Trump's Republican Party has increased to **222 in the 435-member House of Representatives**.
- With this, President Joe Biden's Democratic Party has come in the minority in the House of Representatives.
- Kevin McCarthy has become the **third most senior US position** after US President **Joe Biden** and Vice President **Kamala Harris**.

#### **About Kevin McCarthy**

- Kevin McCarthy is a member of the Republican Party.
- He was elected as the House Minority Leader from **2019 to 2023**.

- He previously served as the House **Majority Leader from 2014 to 2019** under
- Speakers **John Boehner and Paul Ryan.**
  - McCarthy has been elected as a member of the US Parliament **9 times**. He was born in **Bakersfield, California.**