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1. Swati Nayak selected for the 2023 Borlaug Field Award (Sept. 21, 2023)

Odia scientist Swati Nayak selected as the recipient of the Borlaug Field Award 2023.

An Overview of the News

- Swati Nayak is currently working as a Scientist and South Asia Head for Seed System and Product Management at the Philippines-based CGIAR-International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).
- Swati Nayak received the award for her innovative approach to engaging farmers in demand-driven rice seed systems, testing, deploying, and promoting access and adoption of climate-resilient and nutritious rice varieties.
- The award was presented to him by the prestigious selection jury of the World Food Prize, highlighting his significant contributions to global food production and combating hunger and malnutrition.

Swati Nayak's Career and Achievements

- Throughout her 13-year career, Swati Nayak has organized over 10,000 on-farm and comparative testings, leading to the dissemination of more than 20 climate-resilient, high-yielding, bio-fortified, and healthier rice varieties through seed systems in multiple countries.
- She was instrumental in introducing the drought-tolerant rice variety Shahbhagi paddy in Mayurbhanj, Odisha, which is highly popular in Odisha and other parts of India even after eight years.
- Swati Nayak contributed to the establishment of Seeds Without Borders, an international seed policy agreement that facilitates the distribution of modern varieties of rice in South and Southeast Asia.
- She actively contributed to empowering women in agriculture through her work with the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) led by the Government of India and the World Bank.

Official Awards Presentation

- Swati Nayak will officially receive the Borlaug Field Award during the Borlaug Dialogue event on October 24 in Des Moines, Iowa.
- The Borlaug Field Prize, named for agricultural scientist and Nobel laureate Norman Borlaug, consists of a \$10,000 prize and an award diploma.

2. India's historic Santiniketan received World Heritage status by UNESCO (Sept. 18, 2023)

Santiniketan, located in **West Bengal**, India, has achieved the prestigious status of being recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

An Overview of the News

- This significant achievement was officially confirmed during the **45th World Heritage Committee meeting** held in **Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**, marking Santiniketan as the **41st World Heritage Property in India**.

Historical Background:

- Shantiniketan was founded as an ashram by **Rabindranath Tagore in 1863**.
- In **1901, Rabindranath Tagore converted it into a school and art centre**, following the traditional Gurukul system of education.

UNESCO Nomination:

- Shantiniketan has been part of the UNESCO tentative list since 2010, reflecting its potential cultural and historical importance.
- The official nomination document for UNESCO inscription was submitted to the World Heritage Center in January 2021.

Rabindranath Tagore's vision:

- Shantiniketan is a symbol of the visionary work of Rabindranath Tagore.
- Tagore's vision, known as '**Visva Bharati**', aimed **to promote global unity by incorporating elements of ancient, medieval and folk traditions**.

About Rabindranath Tagore

- He was an Indian poet, writer, playwright, musician, philosopher, social reformer and painter.
- He reshaped Bengali literature, music and Indian art with contemporary modernism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- Tagore won the **Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913, becoming the first non-European and the first lyricist to win the honour**.
- His notable works include "**Gitanjali**," "**Ghare-Baire**," "**Bharto Bhagyo Bidhata**," "**Gora**," "**Jana Gana Mana**," "**Ravindra Sangeet**," and "**Amar Shonar Bangla**."
- He was often called the "**Bard of Bengal**" and was known by nicknames such as **Gurudev, Kobiguru and Biswokobi**.

About UNESCO

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN).

- It is also a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UN SDGs), a coalition of United Nations agencies and organizations that aims to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Headquarters:- **Paris, France**
- Director General:- **Audrey Azoulay**
- Founded:- **16 November 1945 in London, United Kingdom**
- The organization has:- **193 members and 11 associate members.**

3. International Malala Day - 12 July (July 12, 2023)

International Malala Day is observed every year on July 12 to honour Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani advocate for girls' education and the youngest Nobel laureate.

An Overview of the News

- It serves as a worldwide awareness day, emphasising the need for girls to fight for their right to education.

World Malala Day 2023 Theme:

- The theme for World Malala Day 2023 is inspired by the book "**I Am Malala**", which focuses on the influence of celebrities as heroes and role models for social progress.
- The theme highlights Malala's courage in facing hatred and fighting for her beliefs.

Achievements and Recognition:

- Malala's efforts attracted global attention, leading to her being recognized by Time magazine in 2013 as one of the most influential people in the world.
- In 2014, she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and became the youngest recipient ever.
- Malala has also received the United Nations Human Rights Award and the Liberty Medal.

History:

- Malala Yousafzai was born on 12 July 1997 in Mingora, Pakistan.
- In 2007, the Taliban imposed a ban on girls attending school in her town.
- Despite the ban, Malala spoke to B.B.C. Started writing for Urdu in 2009, advocating for girls' education.
- On 9 October 2012, Taliban gunmen targeted Malala and shot her in the head.
- Malala survived the attack and delivered an impressive speech addressing the United Nations on her 16th birthday.

4. World Hepatitis Day - 28 July (July 28, 2023)

World Hepatitis Day is observed globally on 28 July.

An Overview of the News

- Its main objective is **to raise awareness and drive meaningful change about the global burden of viral hepatitis, which causes liver inflammation, chronic disease and liver cancer.**
- The theme for World Hepatitis Day 2023 is '**We are not waiting**'.
- On July 28, World Hepatitis Day urges people around the world to take immediate action because hepatitis cannot wait.
- Its ultimate goal is to bring about a real change in policies, practices and public perception about hepatitis.

History of World Hepatitis Day

- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has launched **a campaign to make the world free of hepatitis.**
- The World Hepatitis Alliance was **established in 2007.**
- The first community-organised World Hepatitis Day was **observed in 2008.**
- The date of 28 July was chosen because it is the birthday of **Nobel-prize winning scientist Dr. Baruch Blumberg.**
- Dr. Baruch Blumberg discovered the **hepatitis B virus in 1967.**

5. Dalai Lama Receives Ramon Magsaysay Award (April 27, 2023)

Dalai Lama Receives Ramon Magsaysay Award

Dalai Lama personally **received the 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award from members of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation** at his residence.

An Overview of the News

- President of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, **Susanna B. Affan**, along with Foundation Trustee **Emily A. Abrera**, **presented the award to the Dalai Lama.**
- The award was given in **August 1959 by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation in the Philippines.**
- The Dalai Lama's elder brother **Gyalo Thonden** **accepted the Magsaysay Award** on his behalf in August 1959 in Manila, Philippines.
- Since his exile from **Tibet in 1959, the Dalai Lama has been living in India.**

Dalai Lama:

- He is the **spiritual leader of the Tibetan people** and is considered **one of the most important figures in Tibetan Buddhism**.
- The title "**Dalai Lama**" is a combination of the Mongolian word "**Dalai,**" meaning **ocean**, and the Tibetan word "**lama,**" meaning **master, teacher, or mentor**.
- The Dalai Lama is believed to be an **incarnation of Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva of compassion**.
- The current **14th Dalai Lama is Tenzin Gyatso**, who was **born in Tibet in 1935**.
- He was recognized as the Dalai Lama at the age of two and was **enthroned in 1950**.
- In 1959, he had been living in exile in India since a failed rebellion against Chinese rule.

About Ramon Magsaysay Award

- It is an annual award that **recognizes individuals and organisations in Asia for exceptional courage, integrity and service to their communities**.
- The award was **established in 1957** and is named after the late **Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay**.
- The award is given in six categories: government service, public service, community leadership, journalism, creative arts, and peace and international understanding.
- The award has recognized individuals and organisations from various fields and is known as the "**Nobel Prize of Asia**".

6. Malcolm Adiseshiah Award 2023 won by Utsa Patnaik (April 18, 2023)

Malcolm Adiseshiah Award 2023 won by Utsa Patnaik

On 17th April 2023 **economist Utsa Patnaik** was selected for the **2023 Malcolm Adiseshiah Award**.

An Overview of the News

- The award is given every year by the **Malcolm and Elizabeth Adiseshia Trust**.
- The prestigious National Award is conferred on nominations received by **outstanding social scientists** selected by a national level jury specially constituted for the purpose.
- The jury unanimously selected **Professor Patnaik as the recipient of the award this year**.
- The previous winner of the prize was **Indian economist Prabhat Patnaik**, who won it in 2022.

March 2023 Awards

- Ales Bialiatsky - **Nobel Peace Prize**
- Ashley Gardner - **ICC Women's Player of the Month**
- Harry Brook - **ICC Men's Player of the Month**
- Shiv Shankar - **Saraswati Samman 2022**
- Sashidhar Jagdishan - **Business Standard Banker of the Year 2022**
- Mirabai Chanu - **BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year for 2022**
- Dr. L. Murugan - **National Photography Award**
- Gyan Chaturvedi - **32nd Vyas Samman**

7. CR Rao wins International Prize in Statistics 2023 (April 10, 2023)

CR Rao wins International Prize in Statistics 2023

Kalyampudi Radhakrishna Rao, an Indian-American statistician won the **2023 International Prize in Statistics**.

An Overview of the News

- Rao will be honoured with the award at the **International Statistical Institute's World Statistics Congress in Ottawa, Canada** in July.
- The prize will be awarded for Rao's groundbreaking paper, '**The Information and Accuracy Obtained in the Estimation of Statistical Parameters**', published in 1945 in the Bulletin of the **Calcutta Mathematical Society**.
- The paper was later included in the book Breakthroughs in Statistics, 1890–1990.
- The International Prize in Statistics is considered equivalent to the Nobel Prize in Statistics.
- The award recognizes individuals or teams who have made significant contributions to science, technology, and human welfare through the use of statistics.
- Five major international statistical organisations cooperate to award the prize.
- The award carries an **\$80,000** cash prize and is presented once every two years.

About CR Rao

- He is a renowned statistician and **Emeritus Eberly Professor** in the **Department of Statistics, Pennsylvania State University**.
- He was born in **Karnataka** in 1920 and has been associated with the **Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata** since 1941.
- Rao has been honoured with several awards throughout his career, including the **Padma Bhushan** in 1968 and the **Padma Vibhushan** in 2001.
- He was also the recipient of the **SS Bhatnagar Prize** in 1963 and was elected a **Fellow of the Royal Society** in 1967.

Rao received the **Wilkes Medal of the American Statistical Association** in 1979 and the **US National Medal** of Science in 2002.

8. Jharkhand Education Minister Jagarnath Mahato passed away (April 8, 2023)

Jharkhand Education Minister Jagarnath Mahato passed away

Jagarnath Mahto, the **Minister for School Education and Literacy in Jharkhand**, passed away on 6 April at the age of 56.

An Overview of the News

- **Jagarnath Mahato** was airlifted to Chennai last month due to health complications and underwent a lung transplant in **November 2020 after being diagnosed with COVID-19.**
- Jharkhand's education minister was a **four-time MLA from Dumri in Giridih district.**
- Jagarnath Mahato was also known as **Tiger Mahato or Tiger Jagarnath Da.**
- Mahato had represented the Dumri assembly seat since 2000, which has been a stronghold of the **Jharkhand Mukti Morcha party.**
- **In the 2014 assembly elections**, he won the seat by 77,984 votes defeating his nearest rival from the BJP party.

About Jharkhand

- It is a state located in the **eastern region of India.**
- The state is famous for its beautiful waterfalls, such as **Hundru Falls and Jonha Falls.**
- **Betla National Park** is a popular destination in Jharkhand that is **home to elephants, tigers and other wildlife.**
- **Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, is the gateway to Betla National Park** and is also known for the **17th-century Jagannath Temple**, a Hindu temple.
- Tagore Hill in Ranchi is a monument that honours **Nobel Prize-winning author Rabindranath Tagore**, who is considered one of the greatest writers in the history of Bengali literature.

Establishment - **15 November 2000**

Official Flower - **Sacred Tree**

Chief Minister - **Hemant Soren**

Capital - **Ranchi**

9. Luis A. Caffarelli awarded the 2023 Abel Prize (March 25, 2023)

Luis A. Caffarelli awarded the 2023 Abel Prize

Luis Caffarelli of Argentina has been awarded the **2023 Abel Prize**.

An overview of the news

- The 74-year-old **Caffarelli** has been awarded the prize for **his contributions to the field of nonlinear partial equations and free-boundary problems in mathematics**.
- Caffarelli was **born and raised in Buenos Aires, Argentina**, making him the **first Abel Prize laureate from South America**.
- Currently, he is a professor at the **University of Texas, Austin**.

About Abel Prize

- **First awarded in 2003**, the **Abel prize** “recognises pioneering scientific achievements in mathematics”.
- It is named after **Norwegian mathematician Niels Henrik Abel (1802-29)**, who in his short life made pioneering contributions in a multitude of fields.
- It is often considered to be an **equivalent of the Nobel prize**.
- The award carries a **monetary prize of 7.5 million kronor (about \$720,000)** and a **glass plaque designed by Norwegian artist Henrik Haugen**.
- The prize is awarded by the **Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters** on behalf of the Ministry of Education.

10. Ukrainian Rights Group Truth Hounds wins Norwegian prize (March 11, 2023)

Ukrainian rights group Truth Hounds, which **documents war crimes in the Ukraine conflict**, was on 9 March awarded **Norway's Sakharov Freedom Award**.

An overview of the news

- The Sakharov Freedom Award was **established in 1980** with the support of Soviet scientist and **Nobel Peace Prize laureate Andrei Sakharov**.
- The prize has been awarded to the **Norwegian Helsinki Committee human rights organization Truth Hounds** for "**documenting war crimes and possible crimes against humanity**."
- Truth Hounds is a **Ukrainian rights group** founded during the **Maidan Revolution** that led to the fall of pro-Russian former Ukrainian President **Viktor Yanukovich**.

- The award is regularly awarded to human rights defenders from the **former Soviet Union**.