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1. PM inaugurates Whitefield-KR Puram Metro Line in Karnataka (March 28, 2023)

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** on 25 March **inaugurated the much-awaited Whitefield - KR Puram metro line in Bengaluru.**

An overview of the news

- With this **13.71 km stretch with 12 stations, Bengaluru Metro has a connectivity of 69.66 km with 63 stations**, making it the **second largest network in the country after the Delhi Metro.**
- The **Rs 4,249-crore project** will reduce travel time between **Whitefield and KR Puram** by 22 minutes and is expected to increase **passenger traffic by 1.5 lakh.**
- **Delhi has 348 km line, Bengaluru has 69 km and Hyderabad 67 km metro network.**
- The Whitefield-KR Puram Metro Line is an **extension of the existing Purple Line** (the metro's east-west corridor).

2. Tamil Nadu's 18th wildlife sanctuary opened in Erode (March 25, 2023)

Tamil Nadu's 18th wildlife sanctuary opened in Erode

The **Tamil Nadu government** declared **Thanthai Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary as the 18th wildlife sanctuary in the state.**

An Overview of the news

- The sanctuary **covers an area of 80,567 hectares in Anthiyur and Gobichettipalayam taluks of Erode district** and includes reserve forest areas in **Anthiyur, Bargur, Thattakarai and Chennampatti.**
- Thanthai Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary is home to various wild animals including **tigers, elephants, leopards, wild boars, gaurs and deer.**
- The sanctuary will facilitate the placement of additional poaching inspectors and camps, efforts to remove invasive species, reduce conflicts between humans and animals, and promote the conservation of Asian elephants.

About Forest Rights Act (FRA)

- It was enacted in **India in 2006** to recognize and vest forest rights and forestland tenure in forest-dwelling communities, including **Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.**
- The FRA recognizes the **rights of forest-dwelling communities to access, use and manage forest resources and to protect and conserve forests and wildlife.**

- The purpose of FRA is to correct the historical injustice caused by the colonisation of their lands by forest-dwelling communities and the subsequent creation of protected areas and forest reserves.

About Tamil Nadu

- Chief Minister - **M.K. Stalin**
- Capital - **Chennai**
- Governor - **R. N. Ravi**

3. Mata Sharda Devi Temple inaugurated near Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir (March 25, 2023)

Mata Sharda Devi Temple inaugurated near Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir

On March 22, Home Minister **Amit Shah e-inaugurated the Mata Sharda Devi Temple near the Line of Control in Karnah sector of Jammu and Kashmir.**

An Overview of the News

- The architecture and construction of the temple is done according to Hindu scriptures under the aegis of **Sharda Peeth, and the idol of Sharda Maa donated by Sringeri Math is installed.**

About Maa Sharda Devi Temple:

- **Location:** Maa Sharda Devi Temple is located in **Teetwal village of Karnah tehsil of Kupwara district** in the Indian union territory of **Jammu and Kashmir**. It is located near the **Line of Control (LoC)** that separates India and Pakistan.
- **History:** The temple is dedicated to the **Hindu goddess Maa Sharda**, who is believed to be an incarnation of **Saraswati**, the goddess of knowledge and wisdom. According to legend, the temple was built by the Pandavas during their exile. It is believed that the temple was later renovated by King Lalitaditya Muktapida, who ruled the region in the 8th century.
- **Significance:** Maa Sharda Devi Temple is considered a sacred pilgrimage site for Hindus, especially those from the **Kashmiri Pandit community**. The temple attracts devotees from all over India, who come here to seek blessings and worship the Goddess.
- **Architecture:** The temple has a typical Kashmiri style of **architecture, with wooden pillars and intricate carvings**. The inner sanctum sanctorum of the temple houses the **idol of Maa Sharda, which is made of black stone**.
- **Festivals:** The temple is especially popular during the **Navratri festival**, which is celebrated twice a year in the months of March–April and October–November. During this time, the temple is decorated with flowers and lights and special prayers and rituals are performed in honour of the Goddess.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor **Manoj Sinha**

4. Tamil Nadu assembly readopts bill against online gambling (March 25, 2023)

Tamil Nadu assembly readopts bill against online gambling

The **Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly** unanimously re-passed the **online gambling ban bill** on March 23.

An overview of the news

- The **Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly** has re-adopted the **Prohibition of Online Gambling and Regulation of Online Games Bill, 2022**.
- Tamil Nadu Governor **R.N. Ravi** had earlier returned it saying it was against the decisions of the courts.
- The bill was adopted in the assembly for the first time after the government commissioned a survey of the school education department in 2022 to find out the impact of online games on students.

What is Online Gambling?

- Online gambling refers to participating in **gambling activities over the Internet**.
- It can be played on a variety of devices including **computers, laptops, tablets and smartphones** and involves the use of virtual chips or digital currencies instead of cash.
- The **global online gambling market size in 2022 is estimated to be US\$63.53 billion**.
- The **Asia-Pacific region is the largest online gambling market**, with China and Japan accounting for the largest share.
- Online gambling is regulated with varying degrees of restrictions and laws in most countries including India.

Types of online games

- Casino games, Sports betting, Poker, Lottery.

5. Tamil Nadu govt to launch five-year Tamil Nadu Millet Mission (March 22, 2023)

Presenting the state's Agriculture Budget for FY24 in the Assembly on 21 March, Tamil Nadu Minister for Agriculture MRK Panneerselvam

Presenting the **state's Agriculture Budget** for FY24 in the Assembly on 21 March, **Tamil Nadu Minister for Agriculture MRK Panneerselvam** said the state government will implement the **Tamil Nadu Millet Mission for five years.**

An overview of the news

- The government has decided to take up **millet cultivation in 50,000 acres** of fallow land under its **Tamil Nadu Millet Mission** and provide subsidy for crop diversification into millets.
- By bringing millet farmers together, **100 groups of millet producers** will be formed and training programs will be run for them.
- Subsidy will be provided for **setting up sprinkler irrigation system in 12,500 acres.**
- Subsidy assistance will be provided to **farmer producer groups for setting up millet processing centers** to sell value-added millets.
- To create awareness about the goodness of millets, the government will celebrate '**Bajra Utsav**'.
- To increase the production and consumption of millet, direct procurement of ragi and millet will be done and availability of millet will be ensured at fair price shops.
- Millet-based food will be included in **hostels of government institutions and educational institutions.**

About Tamil Nadu State

- The state was formed on **26 January 1950** but its boundaries were redrawn on **14 January 1969.**
- Tamil Nadu is located at the mouth of the **Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean.**
- **Bharatanatyam** is a very popular and famous dance form of **Tamil Nadu.**
- Tamil Nadu is the **largest producer of bananas and flowers**, the **second largest producer of mango, rubber, groundnut, coconut and the third largest producer of coffee.**
- Governor- **Ravindra Narayan Ravi**
- Chief Minister- **M.K.Stalin**
- Assembly seats **235 seats**
- Rajya Sabha Seats - **18**
- Lok Sabha seats- **39**

6. Bihar State foundation day (March 22, 2023)

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has greeted the people of Bihar on **22nd March, Bihar State Foundation Day**.

An overview of the news

- This is the **111th Foundation Day** of the state.
- Bihar Diwas is celebrated every year on **22 March to commemorate the separation of Bihar from Bengal**.
- The tradition of celebrating **Bihar Day was first started in the year 2010** under the guidance of **Chief Minister Nitish Kumar** and since then it is celebrated with great pride.
- **Theme** of 2023 Bihar Diwas is “ **Yuva Shakti ki Pragati**”.
- The day holds immense significance as it provides an opportunity to celebrate the **rich cultural heritage and history of Bihar**.
- It is also a time to reflect on the achievements and challenges of the state and plan for its future development.
- The state of Bihar was carved out from the Bengal presidency on **March 22 in 1912**.

7. Tripura's first butterfly park (March 21, 2023)

A butterfly park set up by the **forest department in a village near the India-Bangladesh international border in South Tripura district** has become a center of attraction for tourists from across the country and Bangladesh.

An overview of the news

- The **Butterfly Ecopark at Chhotakhola**, close to **Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary**, is the **first butterfly park in the Northeast**.
- It was opened **in 2016 in an area of 5.5 hectares with 250 species of butterflies**.
- The park is adjacent to the **Trishna Wildlife Sanctuary** commemorating the Liberation War of Bangladesh and the Endangered Bison Park in the Indo-Bangladesh Friendship Park.
- The surrounding environment attracts many tourists which **helps in the economic development of Tripura**.
- **Tripura has recently declared the Common Birdwing as the state butterfly**.
- In recent years, due to human **pollution and climate change**, the number of butterflies and their natural habitats are decreasing.

About Tripura

- Capital - **Agartala**

- Governor - **Satyadev Narayan Arya**
- Chief Minister - **Manik Shah**
- State Bird - **Green Imperial Pigeon (Ducula aenia)**
- State Tree - **Agar (Aquilaria malaccensis)**
- State Flower - **Nageshwar (Mesua Feria)**
- Borders - **Bangladesh, Mizoram and Assam.**

8. Bombay Jayashri chosen for Sangita Kalanidhi Award 2023 by Music Academy (March 21, 2023)

Carnatic vocalist and Padma Shri awardee Bombay Jayashri

Renowned **Carnatic vocalist and Padma Shri awardee Bombay Jayashri** has been selected for the **Sangita Kalanidhi award for 2023** by the **Music Academy**.

An overview of the news

- Jayashree is one of the **foremost Carnatic musicians** of today, trained initially by his parents and later by **TR Balamani and violinist Lalgudi G. Jayaraman**.
- Apart from Carnatic music, Jayashree is also trained in **Veena, classical dance and Hindustani music**.
- She is known for her melodious and meditative style of singing.
- The **Nritya Kalanidhi Award** for dance has been given to **Vasanthaxmi Narasimhachari**. She has specialized in Bharatnatyam and Kuchipudi.

Sangeeta Kalanidhi Award

- It is considered the **highest honor in the field of Carnatic music**.
- It came into existence in **1942**.
- **In 1942**, it was decided that the composer would be honored with the **title of Sangeet Kalanidhi**, the award consisting of a gold medal and a Birudu Patra (citation).

9. Matua mela is being organised in West Bengal (March 20, 2023)

The **Matua Mela** is being organized in **West Bengal** to commemorate the **212th birth anniversary of Sri Sri Harichand Thakur**, the **founder of the Matua sect**.

About Matua Maha Mela

- West Bengal is hosting the Matua Maha Mela 2023 from **March 19 to March 25**.

- This Mela is being organized by **All India Matua Federation**.
- It is being organized at **Shridham Thakurnagar, Thakurbari in North 24 Parganas of West Bengal**.
- The occasion offers the chance for the Matua community to get together, take part in religious rituals, and honour their spiritual elders.
- The occasion provides an important opportunity to this community to highlight their **customs and cultural heritage**.

Matua Community

- The Matua community has a **sizeable population in both West Bengal and Bangladesh**.
- The Matua sect was founded by **Sri Sri Harichand Thakur** in the **nineteenth century**.
- Over the years the Matua community has faced many **hardships including marginalization and prejudice**.
- The community has persevered in keeping alive its unique **cultural heritage and traditions**.
- After the formation of Bangladesh, their large **population migrated to India**.
- Many people of the community are **yet to obtain Indian citizenship**.

10. UAE's Emaar first overseas company to start a mega-mall project in Kashmir (March 20, 2023)

UAE's Emaar first overseas company to start a mega-mall project in Kashmir

Emaar, a Dubai-based real estate developer, has become the first foreign company to invest in a mega-mall spread over one million square feet in **Srinagar**.

An overview of the news

- Lieutenant Governor **Manoj Sinha** on 19 March **laid the foundation stone of the mega Mall** of Srinagar to be built by Dubai's Emaar Group at **Sempora area** of the city.
- The project will have a **transformative impact on the Union Territory** and will boost infrastructure and employment generation.
- Emaar Group will invest **a total of ₹500 crore**, including **₹250 crore for the mega-mall** and setting up IT towers in Jammu and Srinagar.
- This mega-mall is the **first significant Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Jammu and Kashmir**.

The mall, a joint venture between **Emaar and Delhi-based real estate firm**
• **Magna Waves Buildtech**, is likely to be operational by **2026**.