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1. Earthquake devastation in Turkiye (Feb. 9, 2023)

Earthquake devastation in Turkiye

On 6 February a major **earthquake struck Turkey and Syria**, killing more than **15,000 people**.

An overview of the news

- The **Indian Army** has set up a field hospital in **Iskenderun, Hatay province of Turkey**. The field hospital will treat people affected by the earthquake.
- Three earthquakes measuring **7.8, 7.6 and 6.0 on the Richter scale** hit different regions of **Turkey and neighbouring Syria**.
- The epicentre of the earthquake was **26 km east of the Turkish city of Nurdagi** at a depth of about 18 km on the East Anatolian Fault.
- The earthquake moved northeast, causing devastation in central Turkey and Syria.
- It is the most powerful earthquake to shake the region in more than **100 years**.

Reasons of Turkey's Earthquakes

- **About 95%** of the country's territory is sensitive to earthquakes.
- Major cities of Istanbul and Izmir and the region of East Anatolia are in high risk.

About Earthquake

- In simple words, earthquake refers to the **vibration of the earth**.
- It is a natural phenomenon, in which waves are generated due to the release of energy from inside the earth which spreads in all directions and vibrates the earth.
- The waves produced by an earthquake are called **seismic waves**, which move on the surface of the earth.
- The instruments used to measure earthquakes are called **seismographs**.
- The place below the Earth's surface where the epicenter of an earthquake is located is called the **hypocenter**.
- The place above the surface of the earth where the seismic waves first reach is called the **epicenter**.
- It is measured in the **Richter scale**.

2. 108 Buddhist Pilgrims from Republic of Korea on 43-day walking tour (Feb. 8, 2023)

108 Buddhist Pilgrims from Republic of Korea on 43-day walking tour

A **43-day walking tour of sacred Buddhist sites in India and Nepal is being organised by the Sangwol Society of the Republic of Korea** from February 9 to March 23, 2023.

An overview of the news:

- **108 Buddhist pilgrims** from the Republic of Korea will **travel over 1,100 kilometres** in 43 days as part of the pilgrimage on foot.
- The aim of the pilgrimage is to enhance friendship and cooperation between the two countries.
- Pilgrims will pay obeisance at eight major Buddhist holy sites during the journey.

During the pilgrimage, Buddhist followers will visit the following sites:

- **Bodh Gaya:** Here **Mahatma Buddha attained enlightenment under the Bodhi tree.**
- **Nalanda University:** Nalanda University is one of the ancient universities. It was **founded by the Gupta ruler Kumaragupta I.**
- **Mahaparinirvan Temple:** The Mahaparinirvan Temple, located in Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh, is considered one of the most sacred temples of Buddhism in the whole world. In this temple, a 6.1 metre high idol of Lord Buddha is kept in the lying posture.
- It is believed to be the **death place of Lord Buddha.**
- **Rajgir:** Rajgir is located in the Nalanda district of Bihar. It is a pilgrimage centre for Jains, Buddhists and Hindus.
- **Rambhar Stupa:** Lord Buddha was cremated at this place in 483 BC. This stupa was built by the Malla king
- **Lumbini:** Lumbini is the **birth place of Lord Buddha.** It is located in Nepal.

3. Nearly 600 sea lions die due to bird flu outbreak in Peru (Feb. 8, 2023)

In Peru, about 585 sea lions and 55,000 wild birds have died in recent weeks due to the **H5N1 bird flu virus.**

An overview of the news

- According to the **Sarnap Natural Area Conservation Agency**, after discovering 55,000 dead birds in eight protected coastal areas, rangers found that all of them died due to bird flu.
- Along with this, 585 sea lions have also died in 7 protected marine areas.

- Dead birds include **pelicans, different types of gulls and penguins.**
- H5N1 has also been confirmed in dead sea lions in laboratory tests. After this the authorities announced the **Biological Vigilance Protocol.**
- Peru's National Forest and Wildlife Service has urged people and their pets to avoid and stay away from sea lions and seabirds at the beach.

Avian Influenza (H5N1)

- **Bird flu**, also known as avian influenza (AI), is a highly **contagious viral disease** that affects species of food-producing birds (chickens, turkeys, quail, guinea fowl, etc.), as well as domesticated birds and wild animals.
- Avian influenza virus subtypes are **A(H5N1), A(H7N9), A(H9N2) and A(H10N3).**
- Types **B and C** mostly infect **humans** and usually cause mild illness.

About Peru

- Peru is the **third largest country in South America**, after Brazil and Argentina.
- President: **Dina Boluarte**
- Capital: **Lima**
- Currency : **Nuevo Sol**
- Major Mountain Ranges: **Andes**
- Major Rivers: **Amazon, Ucayali, Madre de Dios**

4. For the first time, Indian-American woman elected as president of Harvard Law Review (Feb. 7, 2023)

Apsara A Iyer, a second year student at **Harvard Law School**, has been elected as the **President of the prestigious Harvard Law Review.**

An overview of the news

- Apsara A Iyer, 29, has become the **first woman** to be named to the post in the prestigious publication's **136-year-long history.**
- Iyer will replace **Priscilla Coronado.**
- Iyer was elected the 137th president of the Harvard Law Review, which was founded in 1887 and is one of the oldest student-run legal scholarship publications.
- The Law Review, operated under the Harvard Law School, is an organisation that reviews and selects articles published in the legal field.

Who Is Apsara Iyer?

- She graduated from **Yale in 2016** with a B A in **Economics and Math, and Spanish.**
- She then did an **MPhil at Oxford** as a Clarendon Scholar because of his dedication to archeology and indigenous communities.
- In 2018, Iyer joined the **Manhattan District Attorney's Antiquities Trafficking Unit (ATU)** which tracks down stolen art and artifacts.
- She has previously been a contributor to the Law School's Harvard Human Rights Journal and the National Security Journal.
- She is also a member of the **South Asian Law Students Association.**

5. Rice bran promoted as staple food amid food crisis in China (Feb. 6, 2023)

China has started promoting **rice bran** as a staple food amid the food crisis in the country, as the food crisis remains a significant issue in China from 2020.

An overview of the news

- China's **National Rural Industry Development Plan (2020-2025)** was formulated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs in 2020 to encourage the full utilization of by-products such as rice bran and wheat bran.

Rice Bran

- Rice bran is the brown outer layer of the rice kernel, which is mainly composed of the **pericarp, aleuron, seed coat, and germ.**
- It contains **50% carbohydrate** (starch), 20% fat, 15% protein and 15% dietary fiber (DF), which is mainly insoluble fiber.
- It contains **14-18% oil.**
- Rice bran oil is a good source of unsaturated **fats, vitamin E,** and other important nutrients.
- It is mostly used as **animal feed.**

Why is China focusing on Rice Bran?

- **Global warming** is a major factor contributing to the growing food problem in China, as well as the loss of agriculturally productive land.
- **One-fifth of the world's population** lives in China. Only **11 percent** of the country's land is considered ideal for agriculture.

- The conflict between **Russia and Ukraine** has also had a negative impact on China's food supply system.
- The **Covid-induced disruption** has created an already dire situation on the food front.

6. Pakistan's former President Pervez Musharraf passes away (Feb. 5, 2023)

Pakistan's former President Pervez Musharraf passes away

Pervez Musharraf, former President of Pakistan, passed away after a prolonged illness on 5 February at a hospital in **Dubai**. He was 79.

An overview of the news

- Musharraf was undergoing treatment for a rare disease called **amyloidosis**, which is caused by a build-up of abnormal proteins called **amyloid** in organs and tissues.
- Musharraf was a **four-star general** who ruled Pakistan for nearly a decade after seizing power in a **1999 coup**.
- Musharraf had been in **self-exile** in **Dubai** since **March 2016** facing trial for treason for suspending the constitution in **2007**.
- He was declared a proclaimed offender in the former Prime Minister **Benazir Bhutto** assassination case and the **Lal Masjid Maulvi murder case**.
- Musharraf rose to power following a military takeover of the government in 1999 and became the **tenth President of Pakistan** in June 2001.
- He resigned in **August 2008**, facing possible impeachment.
- Musharraf was born in **New Delhi in 1943**, at the age of four his family moved to Pakistan. His father was employed in the Ministry of External Affairs, while his mother was a teacher.
- He joined the Pakistan Army in 1961, participated in the **Indo-Pakistani Wars of 1965 and 1971**, and was promoted to the rank of Four Star General.
- Musharraf is considered the chief architect of the **Kargil War**, which took place in 1999, soon after India and Pakistan signed the **Lahore Declaration**.
- Musharraf as president came to **Agra in 2001** for a peace summit with Prime Minister **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**, but talks broke down and a treaty was never signed.
- He was allowed to visit Dubai in **2016**.

7. Sri Lanka celebrates 75th Independence Day (Feb. 5, 2023)

Sri Lanka celebrated **75 years of Independence** on 4 February under the theme **Namo Namu Matha - A step towards a century.**

An overview of the news

- The main ceremony of the National Independence Day Celebrations was held at **Galle Face Green in Colombo.**
- A special cultural arts festival **Lankaralanka** was held at Independence square in Colombo.
- The **Jaffna cultural centre** which was built under an Indian grant will also be opened in a few days.
- India's Union Minister of State for External Affairs **V. Muraleedharan** participated in the Independence Day celebrations.
- The Minister held talks with Sri Lankan President **Ranil Wickremesinghe** and Sri Lankan Foreign Affairs Minister **Ali Sabri** and discussed issues of mutual interest.

Sri Lanka Independence Day

- Known as **Ceylon**, Sri Lanka was a major economic center for the **British Empire**, which granted it semi-independent '**dominionship**' status in 1948.
- Sri Lanka became a full-fledged republic on **May 22, 1972**, and is formally known as the **Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.**
- The first Prime Minister of Sri Lanka was **Don Stephen Senanayake**, who is regarded as the **Father of the Nation.**
- In 1972, **William Gopalwa** became the **first President of Sri Lanka.**
- Independence Day is also celebrated by Sri Lankan expatriate communities in other countries including Australia, Canada, Germany, Singapore and the United States.

8. PM Modi emerges as world's most popular leader, with approval rating of 78% (Feb. 4, 2023)

PM Modi emerges as world's most popular leader, with approval rating of 78%

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has been rated as the **world's most popular leader** with an approval rating of **78 per cent**, according to a survey by US-based consulting firm '**Morning Consult**'.

An overview of the news

- According to the rating, PM Modi's rating is ahead of other leaders including **US President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron and UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak.**

- The poll surveyed **22 global leaders** for the ratings.
- Of the 22 leaders surveyed by the research firm, Prime Minister Narendra Modi topped with **78 per cent**.
- Mexican President **Andrés Manuel López Obrador** is in **second** place with a **68 percent** approval rating, and Swiss President **Alain Berset** is **third** with a **62 percent** approval rating.
- US President **Joe Biden and Canada's Justin Trudeau** received an approval rating of 40 percent and ranked **seventh and ninth**, respectively.
- UK Prime Minister **Rishi Sunak** ranked **13th** on the list with a 30 percent approval rating.
- PM Modi's approval rating had reached an all-time high of 84 percent on **May 2, 2020**.

Morning Consult

- US based Morning Consult's "**Global Leader Approval**" survey is based on data collected from January 26-31 this year.
- Surveys are weighted in each country by age, gender, region, and in some countries by official government sources and education.

9. India welcomes Congo into International Solar Alliance (Feb. 3, 2023)

India welcomes Congo into International Solar Alliance

India has welcomed **Congo** into the International Solar Alliance.

An overview of the news

- According to the Ministry of External Affairs, the **International Solar Alliance Framework Agreement** was signed by **Raymond Serge Bell**, Ambassador of the Republic of Congo in the presence of Joint Secretary (Economic Diplomacy).

International Solar Alliance

- It is a treaty-based **intergovernmental organization** whose primary function is to promote solar development by reducing the cost of financing and technology.
- It is the nodal agency to implement '**One Sun, One World, One Grid**'.
- It aims to transfer the solar energy generated in a specific region to meet the electricity demand of another region.
- It was launched by the Prime Minister of India and the President of France on **30 November 2015** at the Conference of the **Parties (COP-21)** to the UNFCCC in **France (Paris)** along with 121 solar resource rich nations.

- Its key objectives include achieving a global potential of over **1000 GW** of solar power generation capacity and mobilising about \$1000 billion to invest in solar energy by 2030.
- Member-**113 countries** have signed this Framework Agreement. 86 out of 106 countries have signed and ratified this Framework Agreement.
- Headquarters - **Gurugram, India**

Democratic Republic of Congo

- It is located in **Central Africa**. It is the second largest country in Africa after **Algeria**.
- Capital : **Kinshasa**. It is on the bank of **River Congo**.
- Congo is the only river in the world to cross the **equator twice**.
- Currency : **Congo franc**

10. Equatorial Guinea appoints Manuela Roka Botey as first female PM (Feb. 2, 2023)

Equatorial Guinea appoints Manuela Roka Botey as first female PM

Equatorial Guinea has appointed **Manuela Roka Botey** as prime minister on 31 January.

An overview of the news

- She is the **first woman in the country to reach this position**.
- She was appointed by President **Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo** who has ruled the country since **1979**.
- Bote, who was the deputy minister of education in the West African country, replaced **Francisco Pascual Obama Asue**, who held the position of prime minister for nearly eight years.
- The country of about 1.5 million people has had only two presidents since independence from **Spain in 1968**.
- Obiang overthrew his uncle, Francisco Macías Nguema, in a coup in August 1979.

Equatorial Guinea

- It is located on the **west coast of Africa**.
- Capital: **Malabo**
- President: **Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo**
- Currency -**franc**

