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1. **Moldov's PM Natalia Gavrilita resigns (Feb. 11, 2023)**

Moldovan Prime Minister **Natalia Gavrilita** announced her resignation on 10 February.

An overview of the news

- She resigned, citing lack of support in the former Soviet republic. She was in power only for **18 months**.
- Moldova's President **Maia Sandu** has accepted Gavrilita's resignation and said she will speak to parliamentary groups about a possible replacement.
- Ms. Gavrilita's party won a majority in the elections held in **August 2021**.
- The next prime minister of Moldova could be **Dorin Risen**, a European security adviser who is a supporter of Sandu.
- Rieken is expected to be approved as the country's prime minister without interference.
- Moldova, a **former Soviet republic** with a **population of 2.5 million people**, is already facing a host of issues such as rising inflation, a massive influx of refugees from Ukraine and a severe energy crisis in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war.
- Moscow significantly reduced its **electricity supply to Moldova**.
- Last year alone, the country saw protests against a dramatic increase in prices, particularly for **Russian gas**.

About Moldova

- Moldova is located between **Ukraine and Romania**.
- Capital: **Chişinău**
- President: **Maia Sandu**
- Official Language : **Romanian**
- Currency : **Moldovan leu**

2. **PM Modi flags off Secunderabad-Visakhapatnam Vande Bharat Express train (Jan. 15, 2023)**

Visakhapatnam Vande Bharat Express train

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, on the occasion of Pongal on 15 January, virtually flagged off the [Vande Bharata Express train](#) connecting **Secunderabad with Vishakhapatnam**.

An overview of the news

- This is the **8th Vande Bharata Express** which will cover a distance of about eight hours between Secunderabad in Telangana and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.
- The intermediate stops envisaged for the train include **Warangal, Khammam, Vijayawada and Rajahmundry**.
- This will lead to ease of living, boost tourism and benefit the economy.
- In the last few years, seven Vande Bharat trains have covered a distance of **23 lakh kms**, carrying 40 lakh passengers to their destinations.
- The state-of-the-art Vande Bharat Express can accelerate to **100 kmph in just 52 seconds**.

Name of all 8 Vande Bharat Express train

1. Varanasi-New Delhi,
2. Katra-New Delhi,
3. Mumbai Central-Gandhinagar,
4. Amb Andaura - New Delhi
5. Chennai - Mysuru
6. Nagpur - Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh)
7. Howraha-New Jalpaiguri
8. Secunderabad-Visakhapatnam

About Vande Bharat Express Train

- The first Vande Bharat Express was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **15 February 2019**.
- These trains have a self-propelled engine which can save diesel and reduce electricity usage by up to **30%**.
- The first Vande Bharat Express was manufactured by **Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai**.
- It was manufactured under the '**Make in India**' programme, at a cost of about Rs 100 crore.
- These trains can achieve a maximum speed of **160 kmph**.
- In the Union Budget for 2022-2023 the government has proposed the development and manufacture of **400 new Vande Bharat trains** in the next three years.

3. Rajasthan Government to provide LPG cylinder at Rs 500 per cylinder; Ashok Gehlot (Dec. 20, 2022)

Rajasthan Government to provide LPG cylinder at Rs 500 per cylinder

The Rajasthan Government will provide **12 LPG cylinders** per year to the poor families at **Rs 500 per cylinder** from 1 April 2023. This was announced by the Rajasthan Chief Minister **Ashok Gehlot** at the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Alwar on 19 December 2022.

He said the decision was taken to provide relief to the people suffering from unprecedented inflation and unemployment.

Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)

‘Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana’ (PMUY) was launched by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 1 May 2016 in **Ballia, Uttar Pradesh**.

Under the scheme a poor household headed by a woman is provided with a free LPG gas stove and free first LPG Cylinder.

However under the scheme the beneficiaries have to buy the subsidized LPG cylinder.

The target of the PMUY was to release **8 crore LPG connections** by March 2020 which was achieved on 7 September 2019.

PMUY 2.0

It was launched virtually by PM Modi on 10 August 2021 at **Mahoba, Madhya Pradesh**.

It aims to provide additional 1.6 crore LPG connections with special focus on migrant households.

Connection is provided to an adult woman belonging to a poor household.

The beneficiaries should belong to any of the following categories:

- Eligible as per Socio Economic Caste Census 2011 list,
- Belongs to SC/ST households, be a beneficiary of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), Forest dwellers, Most Backward Classes (MBC), Tea and Ex-Tea Garden Tribes, People residing in river Islands.

4. Fifth Scorpene Submarine ‘Vagir’ delivered to Indian Navy (Dec. 20, 2022)

Fifth Scorpene Submarine ‘Vagir’ delivered to Indian Navy

The **fifth submarine of the Project -75, Kalvari Class submarines, Yard 11879 (Vagir)** was delivered to the Indian Navy on 20 December.

Important facts

- Project -75 includes indigenous construction of **six submarines of Scorpene design**.

- These submarines are being constructed at **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai**, under collaboration with M/s Naval Group, France.
- **Launched on 12 Nov 20, Vagir** commenced sea trials from 1 Feb 2022 and has completed all major trials, including weapon and sensor trials, in less time than earlier submarines.
- The construction of these submarines in an Indian yard is another step towards '**Atmanirbhar Bharat**' and instills confidence in the region.
- What is also a remarkable achievement is that this is the third submarine delivered to the Indian Navy in a span of 24 months.

Project- 75

- Project- 75 intends to build six diesel-electric attack submarines of the **Kalvari class** that are based on the **Scorpene-class**, which are being built at MDL (Mazagon Dock Limited).
- Project 75 (I), approved in 2007, is part of the **Indian Navy's 30 year Plan** for indigenous submarine construction.

5. Tamil Nadu government makes Aadhaar mandatory for all its schemes (Dec. 20, 2022)

Tamil Nadu government makes Aadhaar mandatory

The **Tamil Nadu** government has announced that all those who are eligible for benefits (other than minor children) under various government schemes will have to submit proof of having an **Aadhaar number** or get an Aadhaar identification.

Important facts

- As per the order, Aadhaar is mandatory for government employees, government pensioners and beneficiaries of various schemes implemented by the state government through various departments through their implementing agencies.
- Any person who is willing to avail the benefits but does not have an Aadhaar number or has not yet enrolled for Aadhaar, will need to apply for Aadhaar enrollment before registering for the schemes.
- The Treasury and Accounts Department through its implementing agency will provide Aadhaar enrollment facilities for those beneficiaries who are not yet enrolled.
- In case there is no Aadhaar Enrollment Centre, the Department will provide enrollment facilities at convenient locations through its implementing agency in coordination with the existing Registrar of UIDAI or by becoming the Registrar of UIDAI itself.
- The government has also announced a remedial mechanism in case Aadhaar authentication fails due to bad biometrics or any other reason.

- This will be done through Aadhaar One Time Password (OTP) or time-based OTP with limited time validity.

About Tamilnadu

- 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. Gujarat CM unveils Urban G20 logo, website and social media handle (Dec. 19, 2022)

Gujarat CM unveils Urban G20 logo, website and social media handle

Chief Minister of Gujarat **Bhupendra Patel** unveiled the logo, website and social media handles of the Urban-20 conference in Gandhinagar on 19 December 2022. The ceremony was attended virtually by the Union Minister for Urban Development and Urban Housing Hardeep Singh Puri.

Urban 20

The UNESCO heritage city **Ahmedabad** will host the Urban 20 meetings as part of G 20 meetings between Februarys to July 2023.

In July 2023, the U20 mayor's summit will be held in Ahmedabad to discuss urban development issues.

The Urban 20 will provide a platform for the G20 cities to facilitate discussions on important issues of urban development including climate change, social inclusion, sustainable mobility, affordable housing, and financing of urban infrastructure to propose collective solutions.

Indian Presidency of G 20

India officially assumed the Presidency of G20 on 1 December 2022 from Indonesia. The summit meeting of the Head of the States and the leaders of the G20 is scheduled to be held in September 2023 in New Delhi.

To prepare for the summit meeting a series of meetings is to be held by India.

The first meeting was the G-20 Sherpa meeting held in Udaipur in the first week of December 2022.

G-20

The G-20 was founded back in 1999 after the Asian financial crisis.

The Group of Twenty (G-20) comprises 19 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and the United States) and the European Union.

The G-20 members represent around 85 per cent of the global GDP, over 75 per cent of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.

7. Axelsen and Yamaguchi win BWF World Tour Finals (Dec. 11, 2022)

Axelsen and Yamaguchi win BWF World Tour Finals

Men's badminton world number one **Viktor Axelsen** won the **men's singles** title after defeating **Indonesian ace Anthony Ginting** at the season-ending World Tour Finals in **Bangkok** on 11 December.

The BWF moved its **\$1.5 million flagship event** to the Thai capital's Nimibutra Arena after the tournament's original host China pulled out of the tournament due to Covid restrictions.

Men's Singles Final

- Defending champion **Axelsen** appeared fresh, relaxed, energetic and in control as he cruised to a 21-13 win in the first game.
- His confidence had been shaky following a surprise loss to India's **H S Prannoy** on 9 December -- only his third defeat this year -- but he appeared to be a different player on 11 December.

Women's Singles Final

- Defending world champion **Akane Yamaguchi** of **Japan** won the **women's singles title** by defeating **Tai Tzu Ying of Taiwan**.
- In the women's singles final, Yamaguchi won in straight games 21-18, 22-20 in a close match.
- With that, Yamaguchi became the **first women's singles player** since Ye Zhaoying in 1997 to claim the All England Open, World Championships and end-of-season finals all in the same year, as per the Badminton World Federation.

About BWF World Tour

- The BWF World Tour is a Grade 2 badminton tournament series, sanctioned by **Badminton World Federation (BWF)**.
- It is a competition open to the top world ranked players in singles (men's and women's) and doubles (men's, women's and mixed).
- The competition was announced on 19 March 2017 and came into effect starting from 2018.

8. India's largest and fourth business jet terminal commissioned at Cochin International Airport (Dec. 10, 2022)

India's largest and fourth business jet terminal commissioned at Cochin International Airport

Kerala Chief Minister **Pinarayi Vijayan** inaugurated the country's first and biggest charter gateway – the Business Jet Terminal -- at the Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) on 10 December 2022. Cochin airport has become the 4th airport in India after Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad with dedicated private Jet terminals.

According to the CIAL Managing Director, S Suhas "The Business Jet Terminal is going to be India's first Charter Gateway, which will serve as a platform to integrate business jet service, tourism and business conferences,

The business jet terminal inaugurated today was built at a cost of 40 crore rupees by renovating the old domestic terminal. It covers an area of 40,000 sq feet with comfortable lounges, customs and immigration counters, a business centre and other modern facilities.

Cochin International Airport was the first airport in the world to run on solar power. It is the largest airport in Kerala and the seventh largest in India.

International Airports in Kerala

Kerala has the highest number of operational international airports in India. It has 4 international airports. They are:

- Trivandrum International Airport ,
- Cochin International airport ,
- Calicut International Airport and
- Kannur International Airport.

9. HS Prannoy beats Viktor Axelsen in BWF World Tour finals (Dec. 10, 2022)

HS Prannoy beats Viktor Axelsen in BWF World Tour finals

In **badminton India's HS Prannoy**, on 9 December, registered a magnificent win over Olympic and world champion **Viktor Axelsen** in his final **BWF World Tour Finals 2022** match in **Bangkok**.

Important facts

- **Prannoy** prevailed 14-21, 21-17, 21-18 over **Axelsen** in 51 minutes. It is his **second win** over the Dane shuttler in seven meetings.
- After losing the first game, Prannoy fought back to win the two games and the match in 51 minutes.
- Seeded third in the tournament, Prannoy had lost his earlier two Group A matches. In both matches, the Indian shuttler lost after playing a three-game contest.
- Prannoy was the lone Indian player competing at the 2022 season-ending **BWF World Tour Finals** - where only the top 8 players/pairs of the year take part.

About BWF World Tour

- The **BWF World Tour** is a Grade 2 badminton tournament series, sanctioned by **Badminton World Federation (BWF)**.
- It is a competition open to the top world ranked players in **singles** (men's and women's) and **doubles** (men's, women's and mixed).
- The competition was announced on **19 March 2017** and came into effect starting from 2018.

10. A UN panel has recommended that Australia's Great Barrier Reef be listed as a World Heritage Site (Nov. 29, 2022)

Australia's Great Barrier Reef be listed as a World Heritage Site

A **United Nations panel** recommended on November 29, 2022 that **Australia's Great Barrier Reef** should be listed as a **World Heritage Site** that is "**in danger**".

Important facts

- The world's largest coral reef ecosystem has been greatly affected by climate change and ocean warming.
- Frequent bleaching events and **La Nina** are threatening the reef.
- Bleaching occurs when water gets too warm, causing corals to expel the colourful algae living in their tissues and turn white.
- **Australia's** recently elected government has pledged to spend A\$1.2 billion (\$800 million) over the coming years to protect the reef.

What are Coral reefs?

- Coral reefs are one of the most **biologically diverse marine ecosystems on Earth**.

- They play an important role in marine ecosystems and support habitats for **flora and fauna** in the ocean.
- Each coral is called a **polyp** and thousands of such polyps live together to form a colony.

About Great Barrier Reef

- It extends for **1400 miles** along the **north-east coast of Queensland, Australia** and is the world's most extensive and rich coral reef ecosystem.
- It is made up of more than **2,900 reefs and more than 900 islands**.
- It is the largest single structure in the world made by living organisms.
- This reef was selected as a **World Heritage Site in 1981**.