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1. Indian-origin Neera Tandon becomes domestic policy advisor in Biden administration (May 6, 2023)

Indian-origin Neera Tandon becomes domestic policy advisor in Biden administration

On 5 May 2023, an **Indian-American Neera Tandon** has been appointed as the **domestic policy advisor in US President Joe Biden's team**.

Important Point:-

- Tandon's appointment has been made keeping in mind the presidential election to be held in the US in 2024.
- Following Biden's decision to appoint Neera Tandon, she became the first Asian-American to lead the White House Advisory Council.
- Prior to this, Tandon served as Biden's staff secretary during this term.
- Neera Tandon responsibly processed all the paperwork that arrived on the President's desk.
- According to the White House, Neera Tandon oversaw decision-making processes in the domestic, economic and national security teams.

Neera Tandon:

- Neera Tandon was born in Massachusetts to Indian immigrant parents. Tandon studied at the University of California Los Angeles and Yale University.
- With over 25 years of experience working in public policy, Neera Tandon has worked with three US presidents, and also headed one of the country's largest think tanks for nearly a decade.
- Neera Tandon is the former US Secretary of State and a close aide of Hillary Clinton, the Democratic presidential candidate in the 2016 presidential election.
- **Neera also helped pass the Affordable Care Act in the Obama administration.**

2. Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela (May 6, 2023)

Under **Skill India Mission, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** is organising the **Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela (PMNAM)** on **8th May 2023, in 200 districts across the country**.

An overview of the news

- Several local businesses and organizations have been invited to be a part of this **Apprenticeship Fair** to provide relevant apprenticeship training opportunities to local youth.
- The event will witness the **participation of a number of companies representing various sectors.**
- The candidates who are **Class 5 to Class 12 pass** outs or have skill training certificates or are ITI certificate holders or Diploma holders or graduates can apply in this apprenticeship mela.

About Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela

- Apprenticeship fairs are **organized across the country on the second Monday of every month.**
- In these melas, selected individuals are offered apprenticeship opportunities during which **they receive a monthly stipend as per government norms to acquire new skills.**
- Apprenticeship is considered to be the most **sustainable model of skill development** and is getting a lot of boost under the **Skill India Mission.**
- Government is trying **to train 15 lakh youth every year** through apprenticeship training to fulfill this mission.

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4. Ukraine apologises for 'Devi Kali' tweet (May 5, 2023)

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Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister **Emin Zhaparova** expressed regret over the "**misrepresentation**" of **Goddess Kali** by the country's Defense Ministry.

An overview of the news

- Apologizing for this act, he said that this country and its people respect the '**unique Indian culture**'.
- In this illustration, a distorted picture of Goddess Kali was written '**Work of Art**' amidst the smoke of the explosion.
- This picture was tweeted on April 30, about which objection was expressed on the social media platform.
- Jhaparova visited India on 9 April. This was the first official foreign trip by a minister from the Eastern European country (Ukraine) since the Russian invasion of Ukraine began in February last year.

About Ukraine

- Ukraine is a country located in **Eastern Europe** and the **second largest country in the continent after Russia.**
- Its **capital is Kiev**, located on the **Dnieper River in north-central Ukraine.**
- Prime Minister: **Denys Shmyhal**
- President: **Volodymyr Zelensky**
- Capital: **Kyiv**
- Official Language : **Ukrainian**
- Currency : **Rryvnya (UAH)**

5. 21st meeting of Bangladesh-India Joint Steering Committee on Cooperation in Power Sector (May 5, 2023)

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The **21st meeting of the Bangladesh-India Joint Steering Committee (BIJSC)** on the power sector was held on 4th May at **Khulna, Bangladesh**.

An overview of the news

- Bangladesh's Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Secretary **Habibur Rahman** and his Indian counterpart **Alok Kumar** led their respective sides at the meeting.
- The meeting reviewed the progress of ongoing activities related to **mutual cooperation in the power sector** between Bangladesh and India.
- The meeting also examined the **possibility of power generation projects** in India through **BIFPCL** including power export from Bangladesh to India and setting up of solar power projects.
- The delegation also discussed the signing of an agreement to **import 500 MW of hydro power from Nepal by GMR to Bangladesh** through India.
- The progress in the management of the first unit and the implementation of the second unit of the **1320 MW Maitri Super Thermal Power Project** construction project was also reviewed.

People's Republic of Bangladesh

- Capital: **Dhaka**
- Prime Minister: **Sheikh Hasina Wazed**
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7. India and Israel sign MoU for cooperation on industrial research and development (May 5, 2023)

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India and Israel signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to enhance **industrial research and development cooperation** in high-tech areas such as **AI, quantum, semiconductors, healthcare, aerospace, sustainable energy and agriculture.**

An Overview of the News

- The partnership aims to facilitate **collaborative initiatives for industrial research and development** in a diverse range of high-tech domains, including **artificial intelligence, quantum computing, semiconductor technology, synthetic biology, healthcare, aerospace, sustainable energy and agriculture.**
- The MoU will focus on specific projects and will be monitored by a **Joint Steering Committee** to ensure effective implementation.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):

- It is a type of agreement between two or more parties that expresses a shared intention to take a **common line of action.**
- Memoranda of Understanding can be used in situations where the **parties do not intend a legal commitment or cannot form a legally enforceable agreement.**
- MOUs are often used by many companies and government agencies to **define relationships between departments, agencies, or closely related companies.**

About Israel

Israel is a **Middle Eastern country** on the **Mediterranean Sea**.

It is considered the **Holy Land of the Bible by Jews**, Christians and Muslims.

Tel Aviv is the financial centre of the country and is known for its **beaches and Bauhaus architecture**.

Capital and largest city - **Jerusalem**

Official language - **Hebrew**

Recognized Language - **Arabic**

Government - **Unitary parliamentary republic**

President - **Isaac Herzog**

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Chief Justice - **Esther Hayut**

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9. 4th edition of G20 TechSprint competition launched by RBI and BIS (May 5, 2023)

4th edition of G20 TechSprint competition launched by RBI and BIS

The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and the **Bank for International Settlements (BIS)** launched the **G20 TechSprint 2023 competition** for **cross-border payments innovation**.

An Overview of the News

- The competition focuses on three problem statements: **AML/CFT, sanctions technology and CBDC platform**.
- The competition is open to global innovators and aims to showcase **innovative technology solutions for cross border payments**.
- Techsprint fosters collaboration between **financial institutions, technology providers and stakeholders** to develop innovative solutions for **cross-border payments**.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI):

- It was **established on April 1, 1935** under the **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934**.

- Its central office was initially in **Kolkata, but in 1937** it was permanently **shifted to Mumbai**.
- It regulates banks and NBFCs under the **Banking Regulation Act 1949 and RBI Act 1934 respectively**.
- It issued currency for **India and Myanmar till 1942**, but was discontinued after 1947.

Headquarters - **Mumbai**

Current Governor - **Shaktikanta Das**

About the G20

- It is an **international forum** of the **world's leading economies established in 1999**.
- Its primary objective is **to promote international financial stability and sustainable economic growth**.
- The G20 serves as a forum to discuss and coordinate policies related to a wide range of economic and financial issues such as **trade, investment, employment, energy and climate change**.

10. National Mission For Clean Ganga Organizes River-Cities Alliance Global Seminar (May 5, 2023)

National Mission For Clean Ganga Organizes River-Cities Alliance Global Seminar

The **National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG)** in association with the **National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA)** organized the '**River-Cities Alliance (RCA) Global Seminar: Partnership for Building International River-Sensitive Cities**' on 4th May in New Delhi.

An overview of the news

- The RCA Global Seminar was presided over by **G. Asok Kumar**, Director General (NMCG).
- The aim of this global symposium was to provide a platform for officials from member cities and international stakeholders to discuss and learn from good practices for managing urban rivers.
- The RCA Global Symposium saw the participation of **Embassies/High Commissions of select countries** and their respective river cities.
- The seminar highlighted **RCA's objectives, achievements and potential collaborative outcomes**.

About River Cities Alliance (RCA)

- It was **launched in 2021** as a dedicated platform for river cities of India for discussion and exchange of information for **sustainable management of urban rivers**.
- It was started with **30 cities in 2021** and currently has **95 cities as members across India**.
- It is formed by the successful partnership of the two Ministries - **Ministry of Jal Shakti and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**.
- It focuses on three broad themes - **networking, capacity building and technical support**.
- It will enable cities to learn from each other's success and failure and connect people to rivers.

National Mission for Clean Ganga(NMCG)

- It was registered on **12 August 12, 2011** as a society under the **Societies Registration Act 1860**.
- It serves as the implementing arm of the **National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA)**, which was constituted under the provisions of the **Environment Protection Act (EPA), 1986**.
- It was established to address **pollution challenges in the Ganga river**.
- The operational area of the project covers the Ganga basin and all the states through which the river flows, including Delhi.
- The objective is to **reduce pollution and ensure rejuvenation of the Ganga river**.