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1. India, Malaysia can now trade in Indian rupee (April 3, 2023)

The **Ministry of External Affairs** announced on 1 April that **India and Malaysia have agreed to settle trade in the Indian rupee.**

An overview of the news

- In July 2022, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** allowed settlement of **international trade in Indian currency.**
- This step has been taken only after this **decision of the RBI.**
- According to the Ministry of External Affairs, **trade between India and Malaysia** can now be **settled in Indian Rupee (INR)** in addition to the existing methods of settlement in other currencies.
- The RBI initiative is aimed at **facilitating trade growth and supporting the interests** of the global trading community in the Indian Rupee.
- **Kuala Lumpur-based India International Bank of Malaysia (IIBM)** has introduced this system in India by opening a special Rupee Vostro account through Union Bank of India.
- Vostro accounts are used to make payments in domestic currency.

What is a Vostro Account?

- Vostro is a Latin word meaning "**your**", hence, Vostro Account means "**your account**".
- Vostro account is defined as an account maintained by a **correspondent bank on behalf of another bank.**
- For example **HSBC's Vostro account is being handled by SBI in India.**
- A Vostro account is established to enable a foreign correspondent bank to act as an agent or provide services as an intermediary for a domestic bank.

About Malaysia

- Prime Minister - **Anwar Ibrahim**
- Capital - **Kuala Lumpur**
- Currency - **Malaysian ringgit**
- Official Language - **Malay**
- Official Religion - **Islam**

2. PM Modi invited to France for Bastille Day parade (April 3, 2023)

France has invited Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** to visit **Paris** as a **guest at the annual Bastille Day parade** in July.

About Bastille Day Parade

- The **National Day of France**, also known as **Bastille Day**, is celebrated every year on **14 July**.
- Known in French as **La Fête Nationale or Le 14 Juillet**, the day is celebrated with fireworks and parades.
- This day is considered as one of the **most important days in the history of France**.
- It marks the fall of the Bastille, a military fortress and political prison, which was then considered a symbol of the monarchy and the Armory.

About Bastille Day Parade

- The Bastille Day military parade is a **French military parade** held on the morning of **14 July each year in Paris since 1880**.
- It is one of the **oldest regular military parades** in the world.
- The fall of the **Bastille on July 14, 1789** is widely regarded as the beginning of the **French Revolution**.
- The Bastille was a fortress prison located in the heart of Paris, which became a symbol of royal tyranny and oppression.

3. MOIL Limited records 2nd highest Production since inception in FY'23 (April 3, 2023)

capital expenditure of Rs 245 crore in FY23, which is 14% higher than FY2021-22.

MOIL Limited has registered its **second highest production** since inception with **production of 13.02 lakh tonnes of manganese (Mn) ore** in the financial year 2022-23, registering a **growth of 6% over the previous year**.

An overview of the news

- The company has also achieved a **capital expenditure of Rs 245 crore** in FY23, which is **14% higher than FY2021-22**.
- MOIL has achieved the best ever exploratory core drilling of **41,762 meters in FY23, which is 2.7 times** the average exploration achieved in the last 5 years.
- The sales turnover of **electrolytic manganese dioxide (EMD)** reached a new high, **more than 2 times** that of the previous year.

- **EMD is a 100% import** substitution product, mostly used for manufacturing of pharmaceuticals and batteries.

About MOIL

- MOIL is a **Schedule “A” Miniratna Category-I Company** under the **Union Ministry of Steel**.
- It was originally incorporated as **Manganese Ore (India) Limited in 1962** and its name was changed to **MOIL Limited during 2010-11**.
- The company operates **11 manganese ore mines in India**. It has **7 mines** located in the **Nagpur and Bhandara** districts of Maharashtra and **four in the Balaghat district of Madhya Pradesh**.
- At present the Government of India **owns 53.35% shares** in the company, **Government of Maharashtra (5.96%), Government of Madhya Pradesh (5.38%) and Public (35.31%)**.
- Headquarter: **Nagpur, Maharashtra**
- CMD MOIL Limited : **Ajit Kumar Saxena**

4. PM Modi inaugurated CBI’s diamond jubilee celebrations (April 3, 2023)

PM Modi inaugurated CBI’s diamond jubilee celebrations

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** on 3rd April at **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi**.

An overview of the news

- A investiture ceremony was also held for the recipients of the **President's Police Medal** for Distinguished Service and the **Gold Medal for Best Investigating Officers of the CBI**.
- During the ceremony, PM Modi presented medals to all the awardees.
- The PM also inaugurated the newly constructed **office complexes of the CBI in Shillong, Pune and Nagpur**.
- He released a **postage stamp** and a **commemorative coin** marking the diamond jubilee celebration year of the CBI.
- He also **launched the agency’s Twitter handle**.

Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) was **set up in 1963** by a resolution of the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.

- It is the **premier investigating police agency in India.**
- It is **not a statutory body** but it is empowered to investigate under the **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.**
- The establishment of the CBI was recommended by the **Santhanam Committee (1962-1964).**
- Headquarter - **New Delhi**
- It works under the **Ministry of Personnel, Pension & Public Grievances, Government of India.**
- The Ministry comes under the **direct purview of the Prime Minister's Office.**
- The Motto of CBI is - **Industry, Impartiality, Integrity.**
- The CBI is **headed by a Director**, who is responsible for the overall management and functioning of the agency.
- Director General - **Subodh Kumar Jaiswal**

5. US Senate confirms Indian-American Richard Verma to top State Department post (April 2, 2023)

The **United States Senate** on March 30 confirmed the appointment of **Indian American Richard Verma** as **Deputy Secretary of State, Management and Resources.**

An overview of the news

- This position is normally seen as the **CEO of the powerful State Department in the US Government.**
- Richard Verma served as the **US Ambassador to India** from January 2015 to January 2017 and is currently the Chief Legal Officer and Head of Global Public Policy at **MasterCard.**
- He also served as **Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs** during the Obama administration.
- Prior to this he was **National Security Advisor to United States Senator Harry Reid.**
- Verma has also served as **Vice Chairman of The Asia Group**, Partner and Senior Counselor at Steptoe and Johnson LLP, and Senior Counselor at the Albright Stonebridge Group.
- Verma holds a BS degree from Lehigh University, an LLM with distinction from **Georgetown University Law Center**, and a PhD from Georgetown University.

- He was appointed to the **President's Intelligence Advisory Board** and he is a former member of the **Weapons of Mass Destruction and Terrorism Commission**.

6. ISRO successfully conducts landing experiment of the Reusable Launch Vehicle (April 2, 2023)

ISRO successfully conducts landing experiment of the Reusable Launch Vehicle

The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** on 2 April successfully conducted the **Reusable Launch Vehicle Autonomous Landing Mission (RLV LEX)**.

An overview of the news

- The test was conducted at the **Aeronautical Test Range (ATR), Chitradurga, Karnataka**.
- A **Chinook Helicopter** of the Indian Air Force carried the launch vehicle to a **height of 4.5 kms** and released it in mid-air.
- The **RLV took off at 7.10 am and landed at the ATR airstrip at 7.40 am**.
- It is noteworthy that the rocket can be launched again with the help of a reusable launch vehicle.
- This has successfully achieved the autonomous precise landing of the Space vehicle.
- ISRO had developed the **navigation system, instrumentation and sensors** on its own.
- With this successful test, the dream of developing a reusable spacecraft in India can become a reality.

Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)

- It was established on **15 August 1969**.
- It is the national space agency of India. It launches its space rocket from **Satish Dhawan Space Center in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh**.
- Headquarters: **Bengaluru**
- Chairman: **S Somnath**

7. Georgia became first American state to pass resolution condemning Hinduphobia (April 2, 2023)

The **Assembly of the US state of Georgia** has passed a resolution condemning **Hinduphobia (Prejudice towards Hinduism)**. Georgia has **become the first US state** to implement such a legal measure.

An overview of the news

- The resolution condemns **Hinduphobia and anti-Hindu bigotry** and states that '**Hinduism is the world's largest and oldest religion**' and **1.2 billion people in more than 100 countries** of the world follow this religion.
- The resolution said that this religion incorporates diverse traditions and faith with values of **acceptance, mutual respect and peace**.
- The resolution states that the American-Hindu community has been a major contributor to fields as diverse as **medicine, science and engineering, information technology, hospitality, finance, education, manufacturing, energy and retail**.
- The proposal was introduced by Representatives **Lauren McDonald and Todd Jones** from Atlanta's Forsyth County.
- A large number of **Hindu and Indian-American communities live in Atlanta**.
- The resolution also states that the contribution of the Hindu community in the fields of yoga, Ayurveda, meditation, food, music and art has enriched the cultural fabric.

What is Hinduphobia?

- Hinduphobia is a set of hostile, destructive and derogatory attitudes towards Hinduism and Hindus that may manifest as prejudice, fear or hatred.
- It is true that Hindu Americans have faced discrimination across America.

About Georgia

- Prime Minister - **Irakli Garibashvili**
- President - **Salome Zurbashvili**
- Capital - **Tbilisi**
- Currency - **Georgian Lari (GEL)**

8. PM Modi addresses joint commanders' conference in Bhopal (April 1, 2023)

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** attended the **Joint Commanders' conference** of the **three services** which is being held at **Kushabhau Thackeray International Convention Center in Bhopal**.

An overview of the news

- The theme of the conference is '**Ready, Resurgent, Relevant**'.
- Commanders of the three services and senior officials of the **Ministry of Defense** are participating in the conference.

- The focus of the conference is to advance the **theater command structure for national security**, enhance coordination among the three services and work together in the future.
- Apart from this, the strategy of security forces in the event of war, self-reliance in defense matters and defense ecosystem are also being discussed in the conference.
- The conference was attended by top commanders of the three services including **CDS General Anil Chauhan**, Army Chief General **Manoj Pandey**, Air Chief Marshal **VR Chaudhary** and Navy Chief **Admiral R Hari Kumar**.

9. India's Defence exports touch all-time high of 15 thousand 920 crore rupees (April 1, 2023)

Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** on April 1 said that **India's defence exports** have reached an **all-time high of 15 thousand 920 crore rupees in Financial Year 2022-2023**.

An overview of the news

- India **exported military hardware worth Rs 8,434 crore in 2020-21, Rs 9,115 crore in 2019-20 and Rs 10,745 crore in 2018-19**.
- The amount was **Rs 4,682 crore in 2017-18 and Rs 1,521 crore in 2016-17**.
- The government has set a target of manufacturing defense hardware worth **Rs 1,75,000 crore and taking defense exports to Rs 35,000 crore by 2024-25**.
- In recent years, the government has implemented various measures to promote domestic defense production.

Steps taken by the Government to boost defence production

- **Simplified defence industrial licensing, relaxation of export controls** and grant of No Objection Certificate.
- **Specific incentives** introduced under the foreign trade policy.
- **Defence Production & Export Promotion Policy 2020**.
- The government had issued two "**positive indigenization lists**" which included **209 items** that could not be imported.
- The government has also announced **two dedicated corridors in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh** to act as clusters of defense manufacturing.

The vision of the government

- To achieve a **turnover of \$25 billion**, including **exports of \$5 billion in aerospace and defence goods and services by 2025**.

10. PM flag off Bhopal-New Delhi Vande Bharat Express at Rani Kamlapati Railway Station (April 1, 2023)

On April 1, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the Vande Bharat Express train between Bhopal and New Delhi from Rani Kamalapati Railway Station in Bhopal.

An overview of the news

- The new train being introduced between **Rani Kamalapati Railway Station, Madhya Pradesh and Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway Station** in Delhi will be the **11th Vande Bharat train** of the country.
- This indigenously designed train is equipped with **state-of-the-art passenger amenities**.
- The Vande Bharat train between **Madhya Pradesh and New Delhi** will cover the distance of 701 km in seven hours and 30 minutes and will run on all days except Saturdays.
- It will stop at **Veerangana Laxmibai Jhansi, Gwalior and Agra**.
- The train is equipped with advanced state-of-the-art safety features including Collision Avoidance System - **Kavach**.
- Each coach is fitted with CCTV cameras and passengers can talk to the drivers in case of emergency.
- The executive coaches of the train have been equipped with **180-degree swivel seats**.

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**.