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1. PM Modi inaugurated CBI's diamond jubilee celebrations (April 3, 2023)

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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**

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3. 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**.

4. 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**

5. 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)**

6. 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**.

7. 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.**

8. 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**.

9. Finland became the 31st member of NATO (April 1, 2023)

Finland became the 31st member of NATO

Finland has become the **31st member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** and Turkey's unanimous vote played a key role in Finland's acceptance as a NATO member.

An Overview of the News

- Finland shares a **border of more than 1,300 kilometres with Russia**, and their decision to join NATO was **based on security concerns** following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.
- **Sweden's application to join NATO has been rejected by Turkey and Hungary**.
- With the accession of Finland, NATO now includes countries in **most of Europe and North America**.

About NATO

- **North Atlantic Treaty Organization(NATO)**, is a **military alliance between North American and European countries formed in 1949** and **headquartered in Brussels, Belgium**.
- It was **created during the Cold War** as a defence pact to prevent Soviet expansion and protect member states from possible aggression.

- The founding members of NATO were the **United States, Canada, and ten European countries, including Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.**
- NATO Secretary General- **Jens Stoltenberg**

About Finland

Prime Minister- **Sana Marin**

Capital- **Helsinki**

Currency- **Euro**

10. Axis Bank and Shriram Housing Finance partner for co-lending (April 1, 2023)

Axis Bank and Shriram Housing Finance partner for co-lending

Axis Bank and Shriram Housing Finance Limited (SHFL) entered into a **strategic partnership through the Yubi Co.Lend platform** under the co-lending model.

An Overview of the News

- The partnership aims to address the needs of unorganized sector customers, including self-employed or salaried borrowers, who have limited access to credit due to lack of sufficient income proof.
- The partnership will provide **secured MSME loans** and home loans to middle and low-income group borrowers in rural and semi-urban areas.
- The collaboration between **Axis Bank and SHFL** will address the credit gap faced by MSME and home loan borrowers by using their wide customer reach and rigorous credit underwriting and appraisal tools.
- This partnership is in line with **Axis Bank's India Banking mission of financial inclusion in rural and semi-urban areas** in a seamless digital manner.

About Shriram Housing Finance Limited (SHFL)

- It is a **subsidiary of Shriram City Union Finance Limited (SCUF)** and was **established in 2011**. It is registered with National Housing Bank (NHB) and provides housing finance solutions to individuals, groups and corporate entities.
- The company primarily focuses on catering to the **needs of the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS)** and **Low Income Groups (LIG)** of the society. It also caters to the needs of the middle-income group (MIG) and self-employed individuals.
- As on **December 31, 2022**, the company had **2,901 branches across 19 states and 1 union territory**.
- It has been ranked **8th in the Great Place to Work® Institute's Best Workplaces** for BFSI 2020 list.

