

The Achievers IAS Academy

Patliputra colony, Near: Tennis Court; Patna. Contact: 8434931877, 7250667974

1. 82nd CRPF Raising Day



- CRPF's Mahila Daredevils perform stunts during the 82nd anniversary parade at the Parade Ground, CRPF Academy, Kadarapur, Gurugram on Friday. It was on this day in 1950 that the then Home Minister, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel presented colours to the CRPF after the CRPF Act was enacted and the force rechristened to its present name
- In 1986, the CRPF had raised the first armed women's battalion in the Asia region. At present, it has six such units with over 1,000 personnel in each
- The CRPF is the largest Central Armed Police Force which operates under the Ministry of Home Affairs. The primary role of CRPF is to assist the state/UTs in performing police operations, maintain law and order and counter insurgencies
- The CRPF came into existence during the British era in the year 1939. After India's independence, it became Central Reserve Police Force on 28th December 1949 with the enactment of the CRPF Act.
- Nityanand Rai, Minister of State for Home Affairs, was present at the CRPF Anniversary Parade as well. The minister hailed the exceptional work of the CRPF in women's empowerment, as they shoulder equal responsibilities in effectively dealing with extreme internal challenges like terrorism, militancy, Left Wing Extremism, Rapid Action Force duties in riot control, law and order, maintenance of communal harmony and disaster management.

2. World Happiness Report 2021



- The World Happiness Report 2021 has been released by the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and Finland was once again crowned as the world's happiest country.
- India has been ranked 139 out of 149 countries in the list of UN World Happiness Report 2021. In 2019, India was ranked 140th.

What is World Happiness Report?

- The World Happiness Report is a landmark survey of the state of global happiness that ranks 149 countries by how happy their citizens perceive themselves to be.
- The World Happiness Report 2021 focuses on the effects of Covid-19 and how people all over the world have fared.
- The annual report ranks nations based on gross domestic product per person, healthy life expectancy and the opinions of residents. Surveys ask respondents to indicate on a 1-10 scale how much social support they feel they have if something goes wrong, their freedom to make their own life choices, their sense of how corrupt their society is and how generous they are.
- Finland has been ranked as the happiest country in the world for the fourth consecutive year. The Nordic nation is followed by Iceland, Denmark, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Sweden, Germany and Norway.
- Pakistan is on 105th, Bangladesh on 101st and China on 84th, according to the report.
- People in war-torn Afghanistan are the most unhappy with their lives, followed by Zimbabwe (148), Rwanda (147), Botswana (146) and Lesotho (145).

The happiness study ranks the countries of the world on the basis of questions from the Gallup World Poll. The results are then correlated with other factors, including GDP and social security.

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The United States ranks at 19th place for happiness, despite being one of the richest countries in the world.

Overall, the index showed little change in happiness levels compared to last years' report, which was based on information from before the Covid-19 pandemic

3. Gram Ujala scheme



- State-run EESL arm Convergence Energy Services Ltd (CESL) on Friday launched the Gram Ujala programme under which high quality energy efficient LED bulbs will be given for Rs 10 per piece in certain villages of five states in the first phase. In the first phase of this programme, 15 million LED bulbs will be distributed across villages of Aarah (Bihar), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Vijaywada (Andhra Pradesh), Nagpur (Maharashtra), and villages in western Gujarat. The programme will be financed enti ..
- The Gram Ujala programme was launched by Power & New and Renewable Energy Minister R K Singh in Bihar.
- Under the programme, 7 watt and 12-watt LED bulbs with three years of warranty will be given to rural consumers on submission of working incandescent bulbs.
- The Gram Ujala programme will be implemented in villages of the five districts only and consumers can exchange a maximum of five LED bulbs. These rural households will also have metres installed in their houses to account for usage.
- Union Power Secretary Alok Kumar said it was a very important initiative based on an innovative model utilising carbon credits."Gram Ujala will not only give a fillip to our fight against climate change by increasing energy efficiency, but also usher in a better standard of life, financial savings, and better safety for the citizens in rural areas," he added.

4. Lok Sabha passes bill to amend the Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act.



- Lok Sabha on Friday passed a Bill to amend the Mines and Mineral (Development and Regulation) Act (MMDR Act) through a voice vote, with Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi stating that the amendments will create jobs and allow private players with enhanced technology into the mining sector.
- The reform in the mining sector would generate 55 lakh direct and indirect jobs. To enhance mining activity, we will allow the private sector with enhanced technology in mineral exploration,"Mr. Joshi told the Lok Sabha while moving the Bill. He said India produces 95 minerals and has same potential like South Africa and Australia but the mining sector was under-explored and India still had to import minerals like gold and coal.
- the mining sector right now contributes 1.75% to the country's GDP but the proposed reforms will raise the contribution to 2.5% as it seeks to make a large number of mines available for auctions by resolving legacy issues.
- the Bill removes the distinction between captive and non-captive mines and seeks to introduce an index-based mechanism by developing a National Mineral Index (NMI) for statutory payments. The National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET), to see the functioning of the sector, will be made an autonomous body.
- **Exclude tribal areas'**
- the government asked to exclude tribal areas under the Sixth Schedule.
- A joint committee that included tribal members of Parliament, those from mining areas, besides officials from the ministries of Tribal Affairs ministry, Environment and Forest ministry and Mines Ministry should be formed.\

5. Agriculture MoS questions Global Hunger Index report's methodology.

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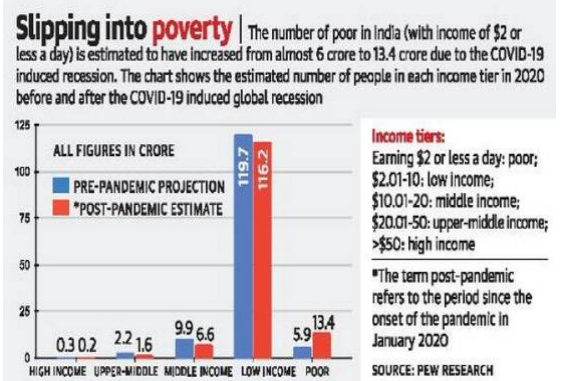
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- Union Minister of State for Agriculture Parshottam Rupala, in the Rajya Sabha on Friday, questioned the methodology and data accuracy of the Global Hunger Index (GHI) report, which has placed India at 94th (out of 107 countries) rank in 2020.
- In a written reply, the Ministry stated that according to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-4, the percentage of wasted, stunted and malnourished children in 2015-16 stood at 21, 38.4 and 35.7, respectively.
- It said that compared to NFHS-4 data, the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS) compiled in 2017-18 showed an improvement of 4%, 3.7% and 2.3% in wasted, stunted and malnourished children respectively.
- The first-ever CNNS was commissioned by the government in 2016 and was conducted from 2016-18, led by the Union Health Ministry, in collaboration with the UNICEF. The findings were published in 2019. CNNS includes only nutrition data, whereas NFHS encompasses overall health indicators.
- Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani informed the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that 10 lakh children were malnourished in the country.
- According to the GHI website, the data for the indicators come from United Nations and other multilateral agencies, including the World Health Organisation and the World Bank.
- GHI is a peer-reviewed annual report, jointly published by Concern Worldwide, an Ireland-based humanitarian group, and Welthungerhilfe, a Germany-based NGO, designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger at the global, regional, and country levels. It says the aim of publishing the report is to trigger action to reduce hunger around the world.

6. Coronavirus | Pandemic may have doubled poverty in India, says Pew study

- India's middle class may have shrunk by a third due to 2020's pandemic-driven recession, while the number of poor people — earning less than ₹150 per day — more than doubled, according to an analysis by the Pew Research Center. In a comparison, Chinese incomes remained relatively unshaken, with just a 2% drop in the



- middle class population, it found.
- The middle class in India is estimated to have shrunk by 3.2 crore in 2020 as a consequence of the downturn, compared with the number it may have reached absent the pandemic," said the report, defining the middle class as people with incomes of approximately ₹700-1,500 or \$10-20 per day.
- "Meanwhile, the number of people who are poor in India (with incomes of \$2 or less a day) is estimated to have increased by 7.5 crore because of the COVID-19 recession. This accounts for nearly 60% of the global increase in poverty," the report added, estimating an increase from almost 6 crore to 13.4 crore poor people. It also noted the record spike in MGNREGA participants as proof that the poor were struggling to find work.
- The vast majority of India's population fall into the low income tier, earning about ₹150 to 700 per day. Pew's projections suggest this group shrank from 119.7 crore to 116.2 crore per day, with about 3.5 crore dropping below the poverty line.
- The middle income group is likely to have decreased from almost 10 crore to just 6.6 crore, while the richer population who earn more than ₹1,500 a day also fell almost 30% to 1.8 crore people.
- In contrast, China's middle class is likely to see a miniscule dip of just one crore, while the number of poor people may have gone up by 10 lakh, according to the report.
- Pew warned that the situation may actually be worse than estimated. "The methodology in this analysis assumes that incomes change at the same rate for all people," it explained. "If the COVID-19 recession has worsened inequality, the increase in the number of poor is likely greater than estimated in this analysis, and the decrease in the number who are high income is likely less than estimated. The middle class may have shrunk by more than projected," it added.

7. Lok Sabha passes bill to place seven castes under Devendrakula Vellalars in Tamil Nadu.

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- The Lok Sabha on Friday passed The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2021, that seeks to put seven castes under one nomenclature of “Devendrakula Vellalars” with some exceptions for some of the castes in certain districts of Tamil Nadu. The castes include Devendrakulathan, Kadaiyan, Kalladi, Kudumban, Pallan, Pannadi and Vathiriyan.
- The castes include Devendrakulathan, Kadaiyan, Kalladi, Kudumban, Pallan, Pannadi and Vathiriyan.
- The State government had earlier accepted a recommendation of a committee to reclassify the seven sub sects under the generic name ‘Devendrakula Velalar’ and forwarded it to the Centre.
- The change in nomenclature was a long pending demand of the community and did not involve either the deletion or addition of any community in its ambit.
- The reason why a whole new addition was not made to the Scheduled Castes list was to ensure that old caste certificates issued to these communities under the old name not be rejected.

- The Department of Science and Technology (DST) has funded a clinical trial at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Rishikesh, to determine if the chanting of the Gayatri Mantra, a religious hymn, and performing the Yoga practice of Pranayama, can aid the quality of recovery as well as cure COVID-19 quicker in a subset of patients.
- The clinical trial, formally registered with the Indian Council of Medical Research’s (ICMR) clinical trial registry (a compulsory requirement for human trials), aims to recruit 20 COVID-19 patients with “moderate symptoms”. Divided into two groups, one will get the standard treatment and the other, along with the standard treatment, will be subject to a regimen of chanting and breathing exercises for 14 days, supervised by a certified yoga instructor.
- The latest study, however, will not test the effect of the intervention on severely ill patients. It will evaluate whether there are differences in the groups on the time taken to test negative
- They will also be evaluated on whether they have reduced fatigue and anxiety disorder.

Important Info :

- Gāyatrī Mantra?
- The Gāyatrī Mantra is also known as the Sāvitrī Mantra.
- It is a highly revered mantra from the Rig Veda, dedicated to Savitr also known as Vedmata.
- Maharshi Vishvamitra had created the Gayatri mantra.
- The mantra is an important part of the upanayana ceremony for young males in Hinduism, and has long been recited by dvija men as part of their daily rituals.
- Modern Hindu reform movements spread the practice of the mantra to include women and all castes and its use is now very widespread.

8. Science Ministry funds trial on effect of Gayatri Mantra in treating COVID-19.

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9. Kamalpreet Kaur qualifies for Tokyo Olympics, breaks national record in women's discus throw.



- Kamalpreet Kaur, on Friday (March 19), set a new senior national record in discus throw with an attempt of 65.06m in the ongoing Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships in Patiala.
- By doing so, the 25-year-old comfortably overhauled the Olympic qualification benchmark of 63.5m thus qualifying for the summer Olympics in Tokyo this year.
- The previous national record holder was Krishna Poonia, with a 64.76m throw, who broke Seema Antil's NR of 64.64 meters.
- The Railways athlete is the first Indian woman to have breached the 65m mark in discus throw.

10. Labour Bureau signs service level agreement with BECIL for conducting all India surveys on Migrant Workers.

- The Labour Bureau has signed a service level agreement with Broadcast Engineering Consultants India Ltd (BECIL) for providing technical and manpower support for conducting all India surveys, including on migrant workers. The signing of the agreement marks the beginning of a new era in the field of IT-enabled surveys, a labour ministry statement said. The Labour Bureau is an attached office of the Ministry of Labour & Employment.
- The surveys to be undertaken by Bureau will be integrated with the technology provided by the BECIL, which will substantially reduce the time taken for completion of surveys by at least 30-40 per cent.
- The ministry in order to implement the newly introduced category of 'Fixed Term Employment' (FTE) has decided that the manpower engaged through the IT partner for supporting these surveys will be offered Fixed Term Employment.
- The Fixed Term Employment is a historic provision in the recent labour codes which will bestow various benefits on the workers engaged for a fixed term by treating them at par with permanent workers.
- Labour Bureau Director General D P S Negi said that it is for the first time that such IT-enabled surveys will be undertaken by an organization on such a large scale.
- This year the Bureau will launch and complete five All India Surveys on migrant workers, domes ..