



The ACHIEVERS IAS ACADEMY

LANGUAGE - ENGLISH

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WORKSHOP ON... GEOGRAPHY FOR 68th BPSC PT



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1. WB Governor unveiled PARAM Shakti, a petascale supercomputer at IIT Kharagpur



The National Supercomputing Mission (NSM), a collaborative project of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Department of Science and Technology, has dedicated PARAM Shakti, a Petascale Supercomputer, to the country at IIT Kharagpur (DST).

KEY POINTS:

- Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Honourable Governor of West Bengal, inaugurated the supercomputer on March 27, 2022.
- The PARAM Shakti supercomputing facility is advancing research and development efforts in diverse disciplines of computational and data sciences.
- In March 2019, IIT Kharagpur and the Centre for Development in Advanced Computing (CDAC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop this state-of-the-art Supercomputing Facility with 17680 CPU cores and 44 GPUs.
- This facility was the first to use an RDHX-based efficient cooling system to achieve great power efficiency.

Both IIT Kharagpur and CDAC have thoroughly tested this system for commercial, open-source, and in-house software in a variety of applications.

2. Former CM Of Sikkim B.B. Gurung Passes Away



The 3rd Chief Minister of Sikkim, Bhim Bahadur Gurung has passed away at his residence in Lumsui in Gangtok, Sikkim. B. Gurung served as a teacher and a staff reporter in a Calcutta (Kolkata)-based newspaper the Amrita Bazar Patrika and he also edited the first news-based Nepali Journal of Sikkim, called Kanchenjunga. Gurung started his political career with Sikkim Rajya Congress Party in 1947 and was later appointed as the General Secretary in 1958. He served as the 3rd CM of Sikkim from 11 May to 24 May 1984, the shortest term in the history of Sikkim. Between 2014 and 2015 he served as the political advisor to the CM of Sikkim.

3. Mirabai Chanu bagged 'BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year' award 2021

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Olympic silver medallist weightlifter, Mirabai Chanu won the 3rd edition of the BBC Indian Sportswoman of The Year award 2021. Chanu created history last year when she became the first Indian weightlifter to clinch a silver medal at the Summer Olympics. Chanu won the gold medal in the 48kg division at the 2017 World Championships in Anaheim and followed up with Commonwealth Games gold in 2018.

Other awardees:

- The BBC Emerging Player award was presented to 18-year-old cricketer Shafali Verma, who has recently been playing at the Women's World Cup in New Zealand. In 2021, Verma became the youngest Indian cricketer, male or female, to play in all three formats for the national team.
- The first Indian woman to have won a medal at the Olympics in 2000, former weightlifter Karnam Malleswari was presented the 'BBC Lifetime Achievement' award. Olympians and the Paralympians from the Tokyo Games were also honoured in this edition of BBC ISWOTY.

4. Living Root Bridges of Meghalaya included tentative list of World Heritage Sites



'Jingkieng Jri or Living Root Bridge', found in over 70 villages in Meghalaya highlighting the socio-cultural, social and botanical links between people and nature, has been included in the tentative list of World Heritage Sites of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Villagers grow the living root bridges by training the 'ficus elastica' tree on both sides of water bodies over a period of about 10 to 15 years where the roots form the bridge. At present, there are about 100 known living root bridges spread across 72 villages in the state. Villagers, (especially Khasi and Jaintia tribal communities) build and maintain these bridges from the past for more than 600 years.

Other sites included in the list:

The Geoglyphs of the Konkan region of Maharashtra, Sri Veerabhadra Temple and Monolithic Bull (Nandi) at Lepakshi of Andhra Pradesh have made it to the Tentative list of UNESCO world heritage sites in 2022.

5. Google Pay, Pine Labs tieup to offer 'Tap to Pay' for UPI users

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Google Pay has launched 'Tap to Pay for UPI', new functionality to bring the seamless convenience of Tap to Pay to Unified Payments Interface (UPI). The initiative has been launched in collaboration with Pine Labs. To complete a payment, all a user will need to do is tap their phone on the POS terminal and authenticate the payment from their phone, using their UPI PIN, making the process virtually instantaneous, as compared to scanning a QR code or entering the UPI-linked mobile number.

The functionality will be available to any UPI user who wants to use their NFC-enabled Android smartphone to transact using any Pine Labs Android POS terminal across the country. This was piloted with Reliance Retail and will now be available at other large merchants such as Future Retail and Starbucks.

6. 20th India-France Bilateral Naval Exercise 'VARUNA -2022' kicks-off



The 20th edition of the Bilateral Naval Exercise between the Indian Navy and French Navy

named 'VARUNA' is being conducted in the Arabian Sea from March 30 to April 03, 2022. The Bilateral Naval Exercises between the two Navies is being held since 1993 and the exercise was christened as 'VARUNA' in 2001. Various ships, submarines, maritime patrol aircraft, fighter aircraft and helicopters of the two navies will be participating in the VARUNA-2022 exercise.

About the exercise:

VARUNA series of exercises continue to provide both the navies opportunities to learn from each other's best practices. The exercise has been a principal driver for operational-level interactions between the two navies and has underscored the shared commitment of both nations to security, safety and freedom of the global maritime commons.

7. Microsoft launches 'Startups Founders Hub' platform



Microsoft launched a new digital and inclusive platform for startup founders in India. The platform called as 'Microsoft for Startups Founders Hub' in India, will support startup founders in India at every stage of their startup journey. This platform will offer over USD 300,000 worth of benefits and credits to startups, including free access to the technology, tools, and resources from the tech giant and

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partners. The initiative will help the Startups to gain mentorship and skilling opportunities with industry experts and Microsoft Learn.

More about the Startups Founders Hub:

- Microsoft for Startups Founders Hub was created following extensive research and conversations with hundreds of founders who explicitly shared their need for access to a digital ecosystem that promotes opportunities and democratises innovation regardless of background, location, progress, or passions.
- Microsoft for Startups Founders Hub is designed specifically for early-stage startups to lower the barriers of business creation, act as a catalyst for entrepreneurship and innovation, and contribute to easing the journey from an idea to a unicorn.

8. Vishwas Patel re-elected as chairman of Payments Council of India



Vishwas Patel has been re-elected as the Chairman of Payments Council of India (PCI) for the second time in 2022, previously he was elected as a Chairman of PCI in the year 2018. In 2013, he served as Co-Chairman of PCI. PCI is a payment ecosystem industry body and is a part of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI). PCI aims to promote a cashless

transaction society and vision to grow digital payment in India.

About the Payments Council of India:

- The Payments Council of India works to promote the growth of the Indian payment industry and promote a cashless economy in the country. It works with other important financial and banking Institutions and Organisations to turn India into a 'cashless society'.
- This industry body for digital operators in the country is said to be in its final stages of submitting its independent application to become a self-regulatory organisation (SRO) for digital payments, under the mandate of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- PCI functions in line with the Digital India Initiative and closely works with the financial regulators of the country.

9. The government of Karnataka has introduced the Vinaya Samarasya initiative



The Basavaraj Bommai government announced the Vinaya Samarasya Yojana as a public awareness campaign against caste prejudice in the state's gramme panchayats. It will be formally launched on April 14, the birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

KEY POINTS:

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- The initiative was named after Vinay, a three-year-old Dalit kid who strayed into a temple in Miyapur hamlet in Karnataka's Koppal district to seek shelter from the rain in September 2021. His family has faced even greater hostility since being fined Rs 25,000 by village elders.
- The area's 1,500 members, largely from the Ganiga group, had intensified their persecution of the Dalit family in the meantime, forcing Vinay's family to leave the village and abandon possessions, including agricultural land. All of the accused who were imprisoned for caste prejudice in the aftermath of the incident were also released on bail, and Vinay's family continues to control the village, according to Vinay's relatives.

10. Two battalions of the Dogra regiment were presented with the President's Colours by the army chief



During an amazing Color Presentation Parade held at the Dogra Regimental Centre, Faizabad (UP), General MM Naravane, Chief of the Army Staff, gave the prestigious President's Colours to two battalions of the Dogra Regiment, namely 20 DOGRA and 21 DOGRA.

KEY POINTS:

- General NC Vij (retd), former COAS and Honorary Colonel of The Dogra Regiment, Army

Commanders of Southern Command and Central Command, as well as a large number of active and retired people, were present at the Color Presentation Parade.

- Following the parade, the Army Chief praised the Dogra Regiment's long traditions in all aspects of military life, including operations, training, and sports.
- The COAS also praised the newly raised units for their outstanding performance in such a short period of time, and wished all ranks well in their efforts to serve the country with pride.

ONE LINER

- UNESCO Founded: **16 November 1945**
- UNESCO Headquarters: **Paris, France**
- UNESCO Members: **193 countries**
- UNESCO Head: **Audrey Azoulay**
- Google CEO: **Sundar Pichai**
- Google Founded: **4 September 1998**
- Google Headquarters: **Mountain View, California, United States.**
- Microsoft CEO and Chairman: **Satya Nadella**
- Microsoft Headquarters: **Redmond, Washington, United States.**