



CURRENT AFFAIRS 18th & 19th Feb 2024

National News

Centre's Proposal For Farmers Amidst Protest: 5-Year MSP Plan For Pulses, Maize, And Cotton



A panel of Union ministers has proposed a five-year plan to purchase pulses, maize, and cotton at Minimum Support Prices (MSP) from farmers.

Government agencies will buy pulses, maize, and cotton crops at MSP for five years through agreements with farmers. Entities like NCCF and NAFED will enter contracts with farmers growing specific crops to ensure MSP procurement.

No restrictions are placed on the quantity purchased, enhancing farmer security and market stability. Furthermore, a dedicated portal will be established to facilitate transparent transactions.

Economy News

India's Outward FDI In January 2024 Rises 25.7% To \$2.1 Billion

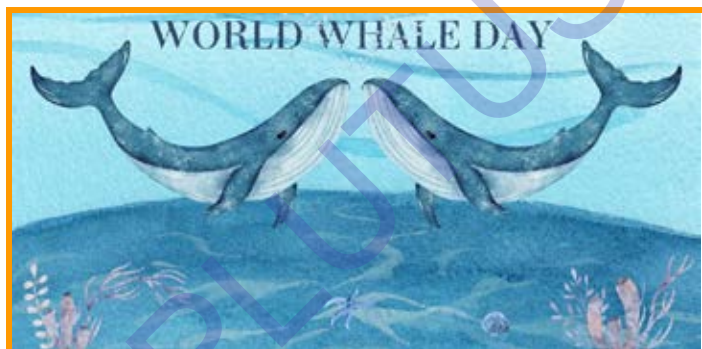


According to recent data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), In January 2024, India's outward foreign direct investment (FDI) commitments surged by 25.7% year-on-year to \$2.09 billion.

In January 2024, equity commitments surged to \$760.9 million, marking a substantial increase from \$597.4 million recorded in January 2023. However, this figure was slightly lower than the equity commitments of \$834.7 million reported in December 2023.

Important Days News

World Whale Day 2024



World Whale Day, observed on the third Sunday of February, is a pivotal event aimed at highlighting the critical importance of whale conservation.

This year, the day falls on February 18, spotlighting the urgent need to protect these marine behemoths crucial for ecological equilibrium.

Founded in 1980 by Greg Kauffman and the Pacific Whale Foundation, the initiative, initially centered on North Pacific humpback whales, has evolved into the Maui Whale Festival, celebrating broader successes in whale conservation.

World Pangolin Day 2024 Observed On February 17th



The Andhra Pradesh Forest Department, in collaboration with environmentalists, has launched an awareness campaign to commemorate World Pangolin Day on February 17, 2024.

Highlighting the plight of the Indian Pangolin also known as the Thick-Tailed Pangolin or Scaly Anteater, this initiative underscores the urgent need for conservation efforts for one of the world's most trafficked mammals.

Schemes News

Odisha Govt Introduces 'Swayam' Scheme For Youth Empowerment



In a significant move towards empowering the youth of Odisha, the state government has unveiled the 'Swayam' scheme aimed at providing interest-free loans to young entrepreneurs.

This initiative, announced by Odisha Agriculture Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain, underscores the government's commitment to fostering self-employment opportunities and economic growth.

Under the 'Swayam' scheme, eligible rural and urban youth aged between 18-35 years will have access to interest-free loans of up to Rs 1 lakh.

Ranks & Reports News

Karnataka Leads In EV Infrastructure Development



Karnataka has emerged as the frontrunner in India's electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure development, boasting the highest number of public charging stations according to Bureau of Energy Efficiency statistics.

Karnataka leads with 5,059 public EV charging stations, surpassing Maharashtra and Delhi. Maharashtra follows with 3,079 stations, and Delhi with 1,886. Other states with notable numbers include Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan.

Henley Passport Index 2024: France Tops List; India At 85th



The 2024 edition of the Henley Passport Index has been published, offering significant insights into global mobility and soft power.

This index assesses nations based on passport strength, providing valuable insight into the global landscape of mobility and soft power.

France secures the top spot on the Henley Passport Index, with its passport granting visa-free access to 194 countries. India slips one rank down to 85th place, despite an increase in visa-free access for its citizens to 62 countries.

Summits & Conferences News

External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar Attends 60th Munich Security Conference In Germany



External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar is currently participating in the 60th Munich Security Conference in Germany.

During the conference, he is engaging in various discussions and meetings with global leaders to address bilateral cooperation and key global and regional concerns.

The 60th Munich Security Conference, spanning three days, serves as a platform for high-level debates on the world's most pressing security challenges.

Appointments News

Pradeep Kumar Sinha Appointed As Non-Executive Part-Time Chairman Of ICICI Bank



ICICI Bank announced the appointment of Mr. Pradeep Kumar Sinha as the Non-Executive Part-time Chairman at its recent board meeting. This decision follows the retirement of Mr. G. C. Chaturvedi, the current Chairman, effective June 30, 2024. He was appointed as an Additional (Independent) Director for a five-year term, starting immediately, pending shareholder approval. Additionally, he will serve as the Non-Executive Part-time Chairman from July 1, 2024, or upon RBI approval, succeeding Mr. G. C. Chaturvedi.

Awards News

Gulzar And Jagadguru Rambhadracharya Awarded Prestigious Jnanpith Award 2023



The Jnanpith Award, India's most prestigious literary accolade, has announced its recipients for the year 2023, marking a momentous occasion in the annals of Indian literature.

This year, the honour is bestowed upon two luminaries from the world of letters: celebrated Urdu poet and Bollywood personality Gulzar, and the distinguished Sanskrit scholar and spiritual leader Jagadguru Rambhadracharya.

Their selection for the 58th edition of the award underscores the rich diversity and depth of Indian literary traditions, spanning the classical to the contemporary.

Science & Technology News

ISRO Young Scientist Programme 2024 (YUVIKA): Empowering Future Space Explorers



The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) introduces the “Young Scientist Programme” “YUva Vigyani KARYakram” (YUVIKA) to foster the innate curiosity of children and youth towards space science.

YUVIKA aims to impart fundamental knowledge on Space Science, Technology, and Applications, particularly targeting rural areas.

The program aspires to ignite interest in STEM fields and nurture future talents in space exploration. Its objective is to provide basic knowledge on Space Science, Technology, and Applications, with a focus on emerging trends....

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