

DAILY PT POINTERS

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HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu: GS3-S&T (Page 11)



Can ChatGPT, the chatbot developed by OpenAI, replace human therapists?

OpenAI announced that it had upgraded ChatGPT with voice and image capabilities, allowing users to chat with it, making conversations with the software more personal. What happens when people begin to see and use the AI large language model as a therapist?

What is the ELIZA effect?

- ELIZA effect is the phenomenon in which people think computer programs or similar systems have become capable of human emotions or functions because of the way they respond to user input. It is named after a 1960s computer program which also responded to users, albeit with very basic sentences that echoed their original words. This program was credited to MIT professor Joseph Weizenbaum.

The Hindu: GS2-IR / GS3-Cyber Security (Page 12)

Cases of human trafficking victims being forced to commit cybercrimes on the rise

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

The first Interpol operation against fraud schemes fuelled by victims of human trafficking has unearthed further evidence that the trend is expanding beyond the southeast Asian region. Indian enforcement agencies also participated in the exercise.

The fraud schemes included fake cryptocurrency investments, fraudulent work-from-home offers, and lottery and online gambling scams.

Known as "Operation Storm Makers II", the Interpol exercise resulted in the arrest of 281 persons in different countries, on charges such as human trafficking, passport for-

gery, corruption, telecommunications fraud, and sexual exploitation.

While 149 human trafficking victims were rescued, over 360 investigations were opened, several of which are still being pursued by law enforcement agencies.

According to Interpol, the Telangana police registered one of the first cases in India of human trafficking committed to force victims to commit cyberfraud. As it turned out, an accountant was lured to a southeast Asian country, where he was made to participate in online fraud schemes and subjected to inhuman conditions. He was able to leave following the payment of a ransom.

In August, a UN Human

Rights Office report took up the issue and found that the frauds ranged from romance-investment scams and cryptofraud to illegal gambling.

"Victims face a range of serious violations and abuses, including threats to their safety and security; and many have been subjected to torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, arbitrary detention, sexual violence, forced labour, and other human rights abuses," the UN report said.

"Credible sources indicate that at least 1,20,000 people across Myanmar may be held in situations where they are forced to carry out online scams, with estimates in Cambo-

dia similarly at around 1,00,000. Other States in the region, including Lao PDR, the Philippines and Thailand, have also been identified as main countries of destination or transit where at least tens of thousands of people have been involved," the report added, noting that the scam syndicates generated annual revenues amounting to billions of dollars.

"Most people trafficked into the online scam operations are men, although women and adolescents are also among the victims," it said.

In October, Ugandan law enforcement had reported that several citizens were taken to Dubai on the promise of jobs and then to Myanmar via Thailand.

- Operation Storm Makers II mobilized law enforcement in 27 countries across Asia and other regions to target human trafficking and migrant smuggling
- The first INTERPOL operation specifically targeting the phenomenon of human trafficking-fuelled fraud.
- It has revealed further evidence that the crime trend is expanding beyond Southeast Asia.
- Victims are often lured through fake job ads and forced to commit online fraud on an industrial scale, while enduring abject physical abuse. Fraud schemes include fake cryptocurrency investments, as well as work-from-home, lottery and online gambling scams.

The Hindu: GS3-Economy (Page 14)

21.15 lakh applications received under PM Vishwakarma Scheme, says Skill Ministry

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

The PM Vishwakarma Scheme, launched by the Centre on September 17, has received over 21 lakh applications in two-and-a-half months, data from the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) show. The scheme, aimed at supporting and providing skill-upgrade training to artisans and craftspeople, was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The highest number of applications had come from Karnataka (6.28 lakh), followed by West Bengal (4.04 lakh), Assam (1.83 lakh), Uttar Pradesh (1.53 lakh) and Andhra Pradesh (1.21 lakh). In contrast, 15 States including Haryana, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and north-eastern States have sent fewer than 10,000 applications each.

Atul Kumar Tewari, Sec-



Women workers protesting at Jantar Mantar demanding the scrapping of Vishwakarma Scheme. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

retary, MSDE, told *The Hindu* that of 21.15 lakh applications seeking training received till December 1, 9.13 lakh (43%) were from tailors (*darzi*). "Another 4.72 lakh applications, or 22%, were from masons [*mistri*], 1.86 lakh [9%] were from carpenters [*suthar*], and 4% each from basket-makers and barbers [*naai*]," said Mr. Tewari.

"We have also received

4,013 applications for the trade of armourer. It was thought that this was an ancient and redundant profession but it seems armourers are in demand for making movie costumes," Mr. Tewari added.

The Vishwakarma Scheme provides formal training for upgrade and modernisation of traditional skills amid a changing economic landscape. It al-

so offers financial assistance and creates avenues of "market linkage" for persons working in 18 trades and crafts. These include carpenter, boat-maker, armourer, blacksmith, hammer and tool kit maker, locksmith, goldsmith, potter, sculptor, cobbler, mason, basket-maker, doll and toy-maker, barber, garland maker, washerman, tailor, and fishing net-maker.

Mr. Tewari further added that while lakhs of persons have applied across the country, they are being vetted at three levels – by village committees and district and State levels.

"As of December 1, 17,758 candidates are ready to undergo training from 21 States. The target is to cover six lakh beneficiaries in FY 2023-24," Mr. Tewari said. Of these, Karnataka has verified 7,924 candidates, followed by Assam (4,980), Andhra Pradesh (2,737), Uttar Pradesh (1,033). "After the appli-

cants are thoroughly vetted, they will attend basic training of five to seven days and advanced training of 15 days with a stipend of ₹500 per day that will expose them to modern tools, latest technologies, design elements, and digital and financial skills," Mr. Tewari said.

The budget envisaged for the scheme from financial year 2023-24 to 2027-28 is ₹13,000 crore. While 4.04 lakh candidates have applied from West Bengal, the State has not put in place village-, district- and State-level committees for vetting candidates yet, officials said.

Lucknow-based Jai Kumar Tiwari, one of the master trainers, who is also on the training panel of Department of Housing and Urban Planning in Uttar Pradesh, told *The Hindu* that he will train some of the early batches of Vishwakarma applicants at Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh. later this month.

- The PM Vishwakarma Scheme, launched by the Centre on September 17, has received over 21 lakh applications in two and a half months, data from the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) show.
- The scheme, aimed at supporting and providing skill-upgradation training to artisans and craftspeople,
- PM Vishwakarma Yojana will be fully funded by the Union Government with a financial outlay of ₹13,000 crore for a period of five years (FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28)
- The Vishwakarmas will be registered free of charge through Common Services Centres using a biometric-based PM Vishwakarma Portal.
- The artisans and craftspeople will be provided recognition through a PM Vishwakarma Certificate and an ID Card. They will receive collateral-free credit support of up to ₹1 lakh (first tranche) and ₹2 lakh (second tranche) with a concessional interest rate of 5%.

The Hindu: Miscellaneous (Page 15)

Sudan declares 15 diplomats of UAE *persona non grata*

Agence France-Press
PORT SUDAN

12,000 people and displacing seven million.

Sudan's Foreign Ministry declared 15 UAE diplomats *persona non grata* on Sunday, demanding they leave Sudan "within 48 hours".

In recent weeks, pro-Army demonstrators and officials loyal to Army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan have accused the United Arab Emirates of supporting the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, led by Burhan's former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo. The two forces have been at war since April 15, killing

Benefiting parties

World leaders including UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres have said unnamed actors supplying "financial and weapons" support to both warring sides have contributed to the ongoing carnage.

While Egypt and Turkey have stood firmly in the army's corner, the UAE has been accused of funnelling arms and support to the RSF, which controls much of the country's lucrative gold mining sector.

- A Latin phrase meaning "unwelcome person." As a legal term, it refers to the practice of a state prohibiting a diplomat from entering the country as a diplomat, or censuring a diplomat already resident in the country for conduct unbecoming of the status of a diplomat.
- the designation received diplomatic meaning at the 1961 Vienna Convention for Diplomatic Relations. Article 9 of the treaty mentions that a country can declare any member of a diplomatic staff *persona non grata* "at any time and without having to explain its decision."

The Hindu: GSIII-Species (Page 20)

Pinna nobilis: Comeback hero

Reuters

A huge clam that was on the verge of extinction has made a comeback, with a surge in numbers in waters off Croatia, marine biologists say. The clam, known as the noble pen shell or pinna nobilis, started dying out as a deadly pathogen spread in parts of the Mediterranean around 2016. Numbers plummeted across the region and, until recently, scientists in Croatia only knew of around 10 surviving in their corner of the Adriatic.

Last year, a diver spotted a group of 20 near the shore in the north of the Istria peninsula. "The news sounded incredible. It was impossible they were alive," said Sandro Dujmovic of the Natura Histrica organisation, which manages Istria's protected areas.

This year biologists managed to collect about 100 young specimens and take them to an aquarium. "It was a sign that they are still reproducing themselves," Dujmovic told



A live Pinna nobilis seashell is seen in Vrsar harbor, Croatia, on Thursday. REUTERS

Adriatic town of Pula, they are kept in specially filtered water, clear of the parasites that can attack them.

The scientists said it was too early to say what had caused the comeback, but Croatia's government was funding more research.

- Pinna nobilis is a long-lived Mediterranean endemic species
- It play an important ecological role by filtering sea water and allowing other organisms to flourish.
- The species has long faced many threats, including overexploitation, habitat loss, pollution, and invasive species
- Critically Endangered



HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Indian Express: GSII-Polity and Governance (Page 1)

Article 370 verdict today: What other decisions by the Centre it will impact

From delimitation in Jammu and Kashmir to voting rights to West Pakistan Refugees, a host of decisions will be impacted by the SC verdict on pleas challenging the changes made to Article 370. Here are the crucial ones



- On August 5, 2019, the President issued the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order which inserted a new provision, Article 367(4), in the Indian Constitution. This replaced the expression 'Constituent Assembly of the State' in the proviso to Article 370(3) with 'Legislative Assembly of the State'.
- The same day had seen the Rajya Sabha abrogate Article 370 and pass the Bill to reorganise the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The next day had seen the Lok Sabha pass the Bill and the President declare that Article 370 had ceased to apply.
 - **Article 370:** (Special status of Jammu and Kashmir): Article 370 gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir in the Indian Union and restricted the Centre's legislative powers with respect to the state. It gave the state legislature special powers to draft its own Constitution.**Article 35-A:** Article 35-A was introduced into the Constitution through Article 370. Article 35-A empowered the Jammu and Kashmir state legislature to define the permanent residents of the state and their special rights and privileges.

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Indian Express: S&T–GS 3 (Page 12)

EU 'historic' deal: What does the world's first law on regulating AI propose?

The legislation includes safeguards on the use of AI within the EU, including clear guardrails on its adoption by law enforcement agencies, and consumers have been empowered to launch complaints against any perceived violations.



- The EU becomes the very first continent to set clear rules for the use of AI
- The legislation includes safeguards on the use of AI within the EU, including clear guardrails on its adoption by law enforcement agencies, and consumers have been empowered to launch complaints against any perceived violations.
- The deal includes strong restrictions on facial recognition technology, and on using AI to manipulate human behaviour, alongside provisions for tough penalties for companies breaking the rules.

Indian Express: IR–GS 2 (Page 12)

What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is marking its 75th anniversary?

A relatively compact document, the declaration consists of a preamble and 30 articles setting out fundamental rights and freedoms.

Human Rights Day is celebrated every year on December 10 to commemorate the day in 1948 when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was ratified by the UN General Assembly.

- The theme for Human Rights Day 2023 is "Freedom, Equality and Justice for All"

What is the Universal Declaration?

- A relatively compact document, the declaration consists of a preamble and 30 articles setting out fundamental rights and freedoms.
- Article 1 states that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” And Article 2 says that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms the declaration sets out, “without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.”

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB: Governance-GSII / S&T-GSIII



- YUVAi-Youth for Unnati and Vikas with AI'- a collaborative initiative of National e-Governance Division (NeGD), Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India and Intel India, is set to be prominently featured at the upcoming Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) Summit.
- This programme, designed to equip the youth with essential AI skills, has garnered attention for its innovative approach and commitment to enabling a future-ready workforce.
- YUVAi is aimed to foster a deeper understanding of AI, to enable school students from class 8 to 12 across the nation with AI skills and empower them to become human-centric designers and users of AI.