

# DAILY PT POINTERS

13<sup>th</sup> February, 2024



# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu: Page 12-Polity and Governance (GSII) / Economy (GSIII)

## Hygiene, sanitation rating system for hotels, resorts, homestays yet to take off

States silent on Swachhata Green Leaf Rating, which was launched in November last year by the Union Tourism Ministry; Centre exploring ways to incentivise scheme to encourage participation

Sreeparna Chakrabarty  
NEW DELHI

A government-initiated rating system for the hospitality sector, aimed at ensuring world-class hygiene and sanitation at hotels, resorts, and homestays, has become a non-starter, with no State opting for it so far.

Barring a pilot project in Jammu and Kashmir, there has been no response from the States or the Union Territories despite the Union Tourism Ministry sending three communiqués so far, the last one being in the first week of February, sources said.

The ranking scheme — Swachhata Green Leaf Rating — was launched in November last year by the Union Tourism Ministry in collaboration with the Department of Drinking Wa-



The rating system envisions to voluntarily engage the hospitality sector and contribute to sustainable tourism practices in India. (PH)

ters. Owners and operators of the lodging services are encouraged to adopt good practices for improved and safe sanitation facilities, faecal sludge management, segregation of solid waste at sources, and promotion of alternatives to single-use plastic.

The target groups are hotels, lodges, homestays, dharamshalas, and camps which have portable toilets. The rating will be based on compliance with the safe sanitation practices outlined in the guidelines.

The objective is to prevent pollution in water bodies

and tourism practices in India," the vision statement of the document read.

A senior official of the Tourism Ministry told *The Hindu* that the government was exploring possibilities to incentivise the scheme at some point to encourage participation.

### Rural areas

The official said that efforts would be made to focus on the rural areas, where hospitality units such as homestays, bed and breakfast facilities, small restaurants, and tea shops would be made aware of the scheme. They will also be helped with low-cost technologies.

A three-tiered committee system has been proposed for the implementation of the scheme, beginning with a Verification Sub-Committee

- The ranking scheme — Swachhata Green Leaf Rating — was launched in November 2023 by the Union Tourism Ministry in collaboration with the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
- A government-initiated rating system for the hospitality sector, aimed at ensuring world-class hygiene and sanitation at hotels, resorts, and homestays
- As part of the initiative, the State teams of Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (rural) and the Tourism Department are to organise workshops on the concept, process, and desired outcomes for the stakeholders. Owners and operators of the lodging services are encouraged to adopt good practices for improved and safe sanitation facilities, faecal sludge management, segregation of solid waste at sources, and promotion of alternatives to single-use plastic.
- According to the concept paper of the scheme, it is proposed to launch the Swachta Green Leaf Rating system at all hospitality facilities in the country with or without restaurants.

## HEADLINES OF THE DAY



The Hindu: Page 14 - GS-3 (Economy) / IR (GSII)

# RuPay, UPI rolled out in Mauritius, Sri Lanka

- RuPay cards and Unified Payments Interface (UPI) connectivity between India and Mauritius, as well as UPI connectivity between India and Sri Lanka were established on Monday to deepen financial integration and to facilitate digital payments among citizens of the three countries, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said.
- An Indian traveller to Mauritius will now be able to pay a merchant in Mauritius using UPI. Similarly, a Mauritian traveller will be able to pay a merchant in India using the Instant Payment System (IPS) app of Mauritius.



# HEADLINES OF THE DAY



The Hindu: Science and Tech (GSIII) -Page 18

## Earth-wide telescope confirms black hole's shadow is 'real'

The Event Horizon Telescope is a global network of radio telescopes that work together. In 2019, it produced the first image of a black hole, the one at the centre of the M87 galaxy. The network has confirmed what it observed and shared evidence of movement in the black hole's neighbourhood.

**Earth-wide telescope confirms black hole's shadow is 'real'**

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**Scientists have unveiled new details of a colossal black hole 55 million light-years away first photographed by the worldwide Event Horizon Telescope (EHT) in 2019. The feat provided the first visual evidence that black holes exist, confirming a fundamental prediction of general relativity.**

In a new paper published online on April 11, EHT scientists have reported capturing details of the location of the hole's event horizon – the boundary beyond which light from the other side can't reach us of course – showing the formation of a shadow ring around it.

The EHT's previous results revealed the black hole's 'shadow', a result of the event horizon's gravitational effects, and a signature of its rotation. The picture also helped constrain the black hole's mass and how fast it spins and showed they were with the predictions of the general theory of relativity. The image was hailed as the first observation of "an abstract and wonder" for revealing "a part of the universe that was all but hidden."

The new data, obtained after improving the telescope coverage and resolution, revealed the shadow's size and shape.

"The primary finding is the confirmation of the black hole 'shadow' – the dark region in the center of the image – which is consistent with the predictions of general relativity. The new data also revealed the shadow's size and shape, which is consistent with the predictions of general relativity. The new data also revealed the shadow's size and shape, which is consistent with the predictions of general relativity."

- The Event Horizon Telescope is an international collaboration capturing images of black holes using a virtual Earth-sized telescope.
- The Event Horizon Telescope is a global network of radio telescopes that work together. In 2019, it produced the first image of a black hole, the one at the centre of the M87 galaxy. The network has confirmed what it observed and shared evidence of movement in the black hole's neighbourhood.
- The EHT is not a single telescope but a worldwide network of radio telescopes that work together to study a common object in space. They benefit from a technique called very-long baseline interferometry, where the data each telescope collects about the object is correlated with data from the others using extremely precise clocks.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu: S&T-GS 3 (Page 18)



The LHC at CERN near Geneva, Switzerland.  
REUTERS

*Scientists  
plan to build  
even larger  
atom-smasher  
by 2040*

Associated Press

- The Future Circular Collider study (FCC) is developing designs for the next generation of higher performance particle colliders that could take over from the Large Hadron Collider (LHC)
- Leaders of the European Organisation for Nuclear Research, or CERN, said planning is on track for its envisioned Future Circular Collider, which is estimated to cost 15 billion Swiss francs (\$17.2 billion) and will probably start operating in a first phase by 2040.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu:IR(GSII)

## 'Weimar Triangle' to join hands against disinformation



- The governments of Poland, France and Germany vowed Monday to make Europe a security and defence power with a greater ability to back Ukraine, amid concerns that former U.S. President Donald Trump might return to the White House and allow Russia to expand its aggression on the continent.
- **The Weimar Triangle consists of Paris, Berlin and Warsaw**
  - initially created in 1991 to enable concerted European action.
- Weimar Triangle, a long-dormant regional grouping that was designed to promote cooperation between France, Germany and Poland.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

**The Hindu: Economy(GSIII)**

## India examining reworking of Merchant Shipping Act



- India is looking at reworking its Merchant Shipping laws as it replaces the existing eponymous Act of 1958.
- The new provisions will look to include up-to-date international maritime conventions to which the country is a party; allow for easier registration of ships under Indian flag by NRIs, overseas citizens of India, corporates, including limited liability partnerships; enable electronic registration of vessels and granting recognition to e-documents like log-books, record books.
- Merchant shipping refers to activities that are carried out for commerce rather than for defence or warfare.



# HEADLINES OF THE DAY



Indian Express: Governance (GSII)

## Law Commission Report suggests creation of Epidemic Plan and Standard Operation Procedure to deal with future epidemics

Highlighting the limitations of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 (EDA), the 286th Law Commission Report states “the management, control and prevention of epidemic diseases cannot be restricted to a century-old law.”

- The 286th Law Commission Report recommended creation of an Epidemic Plan and Standard Operation Procedure to address future epidemics, underlining there is no clear demarcation between the powers of the Centre, state, and local authorities during an epidemic, which leads to uncoordinated responses.
- Highlighting the limitations of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 (EDA), the 286th Law Commission Report states “the management, control and prevention of epidemic diseases cannot be restricted to a century-old law.”
- The report notes that the EDA was not designed to combat modern issues with the spread of infectious diseases. Globalisation and increased connectivity, it states, can result in infectious diseases rapidly turning into epidemics or pandemics.
- The report recommends that the EDA must include provisions to ensure that the Epidemic Plan is prepared, enforced, and revised at regular intervals. The report states that the plan should include provisions on quarantine, isolation, and lockdowns, while ensuring that the measures are implemented fairly, without violating the fundamental rights of citizens.



# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

**PIB: Defence (GSIII)**



The Sarang Helicopter Display Team was formed in 2003 and it is noteworthy that their very first International public performance was in 2004, at Asian Aerospace Show Singapore itself.

Initially formed and raised as a three helicopter formation, the Sarang team now boasts of a thrilling five-helicopter display and has performed over 1200 displays at more than 385 venues all around the globe.

Ministry of Defence



## IAF TEAM INDUCTS FOR THE SINGAPORE AIR SHOW 2024

Posted On: 12 FEB 2024 7:40PM by PIB Delhi

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

## PIB: Education (GSII)



- The National Assessment Center, Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH) was established in March 2023 as an independent body under the Ministry of Education to fulfil the objectives suggested by the National Education Policy, 2020
- PARAKH has been set up as the organisation under NCERT. It will work on bringing the school boards across the States and the Union Territories on a common platform.
- PARAKH will act as a common platform for interaction of all concerned stakeholders in order to develop a holistic approach that ensures a fair assessment system which promotes equity in performance and equivalence in assessment of students.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY



## PIB: Environment (GSIII)



- Greening and Restoration of Wasteland with Agroforestry (GROW) report and portal was launched NITI Aayog
- This multi-institutional effort utilized remote sensing and GIS to assess agroforestry suitability across all districts in India. Using thematic datasets, an Agroforestry Suitability Index (ASI) was developed for national-level prioritization.
- The report provides state-wise and district-wise analysis, supporting government departments and industries for greening and restoration projects.
- The "Greening and Restoration of Wasteland with Agroforestry (GROW)-Suitability Mapping" portal Bhuvan allows universal access to state and district-level data. Currently, agroforestry covers 8.65% of India's total geographical area. Current report underscores the potential benefits of converting underutilized areas, especially wastelands, for agroforestry. The GROW initiative aligns with national commitments, aiming to restore 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030 and create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.