DAILY PT POINTERS

13 December, 2024

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu-Miscellaneous -Page1

Gukesh is youngest world chess champ

The 18-year-old from Chennai beats Ding Liren of China in the final game; breaks the record held by Russian Garry Kasparov for nearly 4 decades

P.K. Ajith Kumar
SINGAPORE

History was made in the small island of Sentosa here on Thursday, as D. Gukesh became the youngest world chess champion after defeating Ding Liren of China in the final game of their match. The 18-year-old from Chennai broke the record held by the Russian Garry Kasparov for nearly four decades.

With his victory against the defending champion, which came after 58 moves, Gukesh took his points tally to 7.5. That was the requirement for a player to win the World title. The game was heading towards a draw in fact, until Ding made a fatal error on the 55th move with his

On top of the world: D. Gukesh reacts after beating China's Ding Liren at the FIDE World Chess Championship in Singapore. PTI

back for the Chinese Grandmaster after that.

This was the first-ever World championship match contested by two Asian players.

Gukesh is only the third Asian to win the World championship. Viswanathmentor for Gukesh, was the first, and Ding the second.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 16
EDITORIAL
» PAGE 12
MORE REPORTS

D Gukesh, an 18-year-old from Chennai, became the youngest world chess champion by defeating Ding Liren of China.

Record: Broke the record held by Garry Kasparov for nearly four decades.

- Historical Context: First World championship match between two Asian countries (India and China).
  Third Asian to win the World championship, after Viswanathan Anand and Ding Liren.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu-Governance (GSII)-Page1

Union Cabinet approves Bills on simultaneous polls

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Move paves way to introduce draft legislation in the House. No official announcement has been made so far

The Union Cabinet on Thursday approved two Bills related to the implementation of simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and the Assemblies, paving the way to introduce the draft legislation in Parliament in the ongoing Winter Session.

One of the Bills is to amend the Constitution to implement simultaneous elections, while the other is to amend provisions in laws dealing with Union Territories that have Legislative Assemblies to align their terms with other Legislative Assemblies.

The development evoked sharp responses from the Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, who called the draft Bills "an attack on democracy and federalism".

No official announcement has been made so far, but sources said the Bills would be referred to a joint committee of Parliament, once they are introduced in the House.

For now, the Cabinet has given its approval to the draft legislation for simultaneous polls to the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies. The Constitution amendment Bill to hold simultaneous polls will not require to be ratified by at least 50% of the States, the sources added. A high-level committee, headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind, had also recommended holding simultaneous polls to municipalities and panchayats, but the Cabinet has decided not to get into the issue of synchronising local body polls. This would have not only required a Constitution amendment, to insert a new Article 324A, but also ratification by half the Assemblies.

Taking to the social media platform X, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said, "This impractical and anti-democratic move will erase regional voices, erode federalism, and disrupt governance. Rise up #INDIA! Let us resist this attack on Indian democracy with all our strength!"

In a separate X post, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee called it "an authoritarian imposition designed to undermine India's democracy and federal structure".

"Our MPs will oppose this draconian legislation tooth and nail in Parliament. Bengal will NEVER bow to Delhi's dictatorial whims. This fight is about saving India's democracy from the clutches of autocracy!" she added.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 16

- Union Cabinet approved two Bills for simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.
  One Bill amends the Constitution; the other aligns Union Territories' Legislative Assemblies with other Assemblies.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi advocates simultaneous elections to reduce poll-related expenditure and minimize governance disruption due to the model code of conduct.

Do you know ?

During the first four general election cycles in 1952, 1957, 1962 and 1967, the elections to the Lok Sabha and State legislative assemblies were held simultaneously. However, due to the subsequent premature dissolution of the Lok Sabha on seven occasions and the premature dissolution of legislative assemblies on various occasions, the elections to the Lok Sabha and various State assemblies are held at different times

The idea of simultaneous elections has been mooted in the past by the Election Commission of India (1982) and the Law Commission (1999).

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu-Environment (GSIII) –Page14

Beijing's war against air pollution

Beijing in 2015 had pollution levels similar to those in Delhi today. However, through coordinated effort over several years, Beijing reduced its pollution by one-third between 2013 and 2017; by learning from Beijing's approach, Delhi can implement effective strategies to tackle its air pollution problem

EXPLAINER

ohit Azad
houvik Chakraborty

Beijing, with a yearly average air quality index (AQI) of 144, was as polluted in 2015 as Delhi is today (Delhi's average is 155 for 024). But in the interim, Beijing has anaged to cut its pollution level by ne-third with the most significant fall panning between 2013 and 2017 (Chart . To be sure, Beijing's pollution control rogramme dates back to 1998 which laid he foundation for this aggressive last hase of the programme, which was rmed a "war against air pollution".

Why discuss Beijing in the context of elhi?

eijing is the capital of an emerging conomy, as is Delhi. So, if Beijing could anage what it did at its stage of evelopment, Delhi could and needs to, s well.

There are many similarities between eijing in 2013 and Delhi today. Chart 2 ompares the sources of pollution for the wo cities.

For Delhi, we have used the winter onths' data because that is the most pdated emission inventory available. oreover, much like Beijing, the regional

Turning the tide on pollution

Beijing's battle against air pollution provides a useful framework for Delhi. With improved transportation, stricter regulations, and regional collaboration, Delhi can follow a similar path to cleaner air

Chart 1: AQI in Beijing vs Delhi 2014-24

(Yearly average)

Chart 2: PM2.5 source apportionment for Beijing and Delhi

(Beijing in 2013 and Delhi in 2023)

Pedestrians walk along the Kartavya Path engulfed in thick smog, near India Gate, in New Delhi, on November 18. AFP

Chart 4: Measure-specific fall in pollutants in Beijing

Contribution of each measure in fall of air pollutants between 2013-17 (in %)

Chart 5: Financial investment to control

THE GIST

Beijing's approach to air pollution involved a long-term coordinated effort with a focus on regional cooperation and comprehensive policies across multiple sectors.

Key measures included improving transportation infrastructure, retrofitting vehicles, scrapping old vehicles, and enhancing industrial regulations.

Delhi can adopt similar strategies, focusing on integrated transport systems, regional collaboration, and stricter emission controls to combat its pollution crisis.

- Beijing's air quality was similar to Delhi's current levels but has managed to cut pollution by one-third since 2015.
- Beijing's Measures: Pollution Sources: Energy structures (coal combustion), transportation, and industrial activities.
- Steps Taken: Ultra-low emission renovation and clean energy alternatives in power plants.
  Retrofitting vehicles with diesel particulate filters and scrapping high-emission vehicles.
  Overhauling subway and bus infrastructure.
  Tightening environmental requirements for industrial and construction activities.
- **Lessons for Delhi:** Implement an efficient bus-metro integrated transport system, scrap old vehicles with subsidies, build cycling and walking lanes, and consider cross-subsidisation.
- Overhaul the energy supply system, subsidize solar rooftops, and connect them to the grid.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu-Disaster Management –Page16

Lok Sabha passes Bill to amend the Disaster Management Act of 2005

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed a Bill to strengthen the working of national and State disaster management authorities, with the Centre stressing that the legislation will help State governments deal with disasters better.

The House cleared the Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill, 2024 by a voice vote. Several amendments moved by the Opposition members were negated.

The new Bill seeks to bring clarity and convergence among stakeholders in the field of disaster management. THULASI KAKKAT

not only overcome them but also strengthen the disaster management system.

whole; this Bill will prepare the country to handle disasters better," he said.

Trinamool Congress alleged that the Modi government was not able to manage the pandemic properly and a large number of people died. He said, "This Bill creates a plethora of organisations and has added a number of English terms".

Captain Viriato Fernandes of the Congress said that while the members were talking about following a holistic approach to deal with disasters, the Bill seemed to have gone against that approach.

Another Congress member, G.K. Padavi, pointed

- The Lok Sabha passed a Bill to strengthen the working of national and State disaster management authorities, with the Centre stressing that the legislation will help State governments deal with disasters better.
- The House cleared the Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill, 2024 by a voice vote. Several amendments moved by the Opposition members were negated.
- Pointing out that State governments had flagged several difficulties in implementing the Disaster Management Act of 2005, Union Minister Nityanand Rai said the new Bill would not only overcome them but also strengthen the disaster management system. The Bill seeks to bring clarity and convergence among stakeholders working in the field of disaster management.
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HEADLINES OF THE DAY

The Hindu-Health –Page26

What is Disease X and why the world should prepare for it

COVID-19 is regarded as the first instance of a real Disease X. When SARS-CoV-2 emerged as an unknown pathogen causing a global pandemic, it exemplified the scenario that Disease X was meant to represent – an unpredictable, novel threat requiring rapid global response and adaptation

C. Aravinda

The story so far

The recent outbreak reported in the first week of December 2024 in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has claimed over 400 lives and remains unclassified, has raised concerns that it could be an instance of Disease X. This unsettling event has reignited discussions about Disease X. Disease X is not an

hosts and environments.

The sheer number of potential pathogens adds to the complexity. Scientists estimate that only a fraction of viruses capable of infecting humans have been identified, leaving a vast pool of unknown threats. Genomic sequencing and artificial intelligence are beginning to play an important role in narrowing this vast field of possibilities, but even with these tools, predicting the exact origin, timing, and behaviour of Disease X

- In early December 2024, an outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) claimed over 400 lives, prompting concerns that it could be an instance of Disease X. Disease X, a term coined by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2018, refers to an unknown pathogen that could trigger a global health crisis. It was conceptualized to prepare for unpredictable outbreaks that are difficult to identify or predict. This term gained significance after the emergence of COVID-19, which embodied the scenario Disease X was meant to represent.The WHO's priority list of pathogens highlights infectious diseases with epidemic or pandemic potential, including Ebola, Marburg, and Lassa fever, among others. Disease X is a placeholder for an unpredictable pathogen that may cause a future pandemic, which could be a virus, bacterium, parasite, or even a prion.
- The challenge in predicting Disease X lies in the vast number of potential pathogens, many of which remain unidentified. Human activities, such as deforestation and urbanization, increase the risk of zoonotic spillover, while climate change is reshaping disease dynamics.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB-Space(GSIII)

Department of Space

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

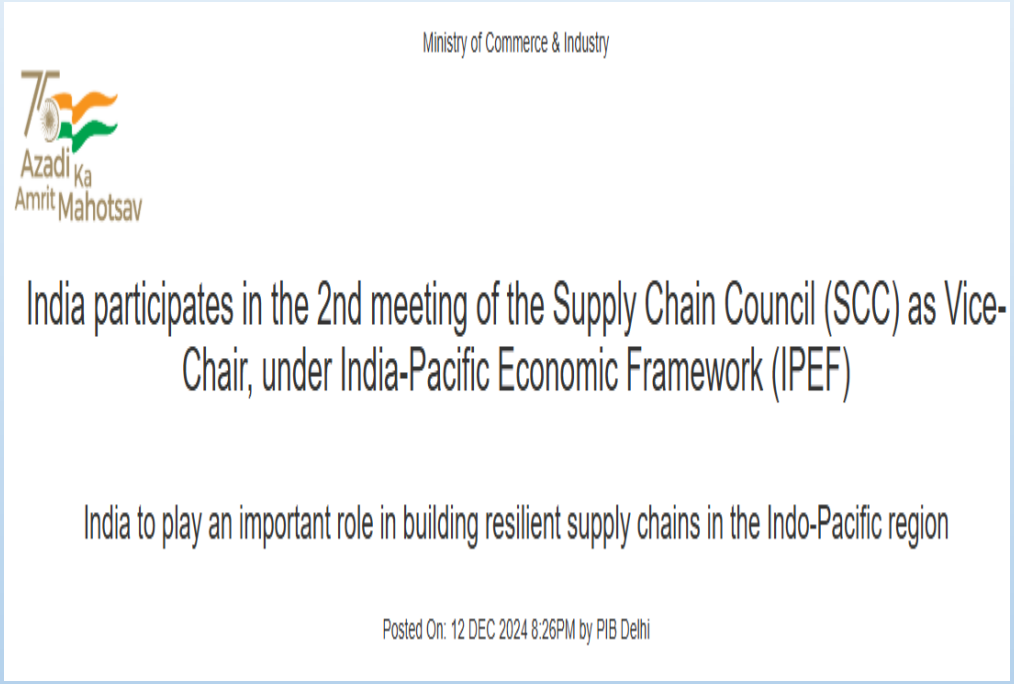
PARLIAMENT QUESTION: EFFORTS TO MAKE INDIA A DEVELOPED NATION BY 2047 IN SPACE SECTOR

Posted On: 12 DEC 2024 4:56PM by PIB Delhi

- Government of India has been making significant efforts towards achieving the goals outlined in India's Space Vision 2047. These efforts focus on technological advancements, international partnerships, increasing the participation of private players and advancing space exploration missions. The major initiatives taken up are Government of India has carried out Space sector reforms in 2020 to allow participation of Indian private sector in space activities.
- Government of India has announced the Space Vision 2047 which targets establishing BharatiyaAntariksh Station (BAS) by 2035 and landing of an Indian on Moon by 2040. Towards this, Government has approved four important projects: Gaganyaan follow-on missions and establishment of BAS 1st module by 2028, Development of Next Generation Satellite Launch Vehicle (NGLV) (Re-Usable Low-cost Launch Vehicle) by 2032, Chandrayaan-4 by 2027, to develop and demonstrate the technologies to come back to Earth after successfully landing on the Moon and also collect moon samples, and Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM) by 2028, to study the Venusian surface and subsurface, atmospheric processes

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB-Economy(GSIII)



Ministry of Commerce & Industry

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

India participates in the 2nd meeting of the Supply Chain Council (SCC) as Vice-Chair, under India-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)

India to play an important role in building resilient supply chains in the Indo-Pacific region

Posted On: 12 DEC 2024 8:26PM by PIB Delhi

- India participates in the 2nd meeting of the Supply Chain Council (SCC) as Vice-Chair, under India-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)
- The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) was launched in May 2022 and currently includes 14 partners – Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, United States and Vietnam (doc20231117271001.pdf (pib.gov.in)). It provides a platform for countries in the region to collaborate on advancing resilient, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth, and aims to contribute to cooperation, stability and prosperity in the region. The IPEF comprises four pillars of cooperation namely: Trade, Supply Chain, Clean Economy and Fair Economy.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

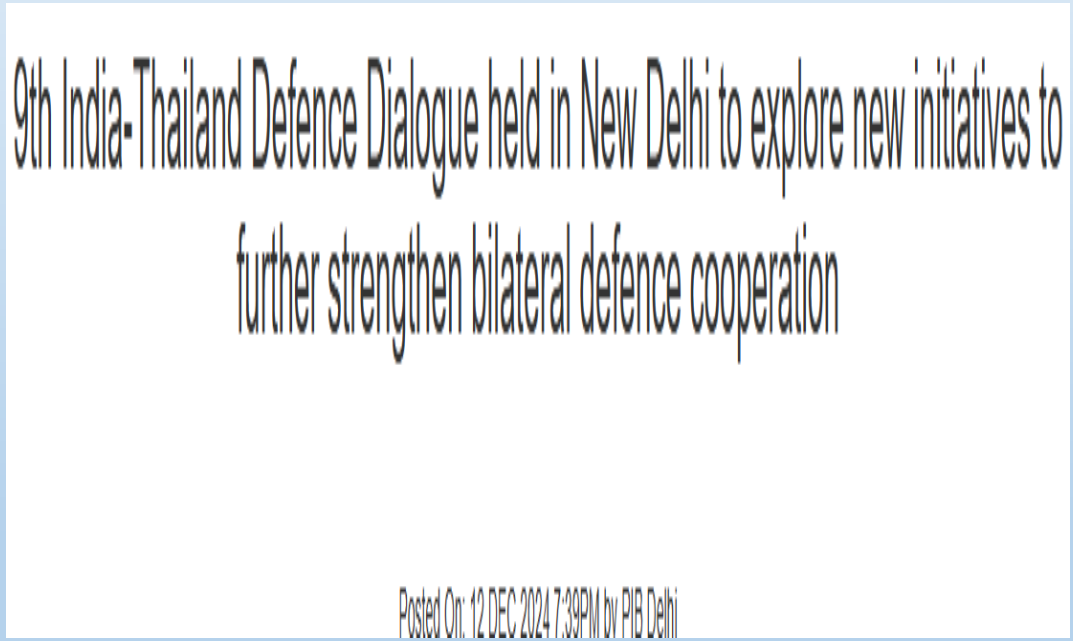
PIB-IR(GSII)

India and EU aiming for a balanced, ambitious, comprehensive and mutually beneficial Free Trade Agreement: Piyush Goyal

India's bilateral trade in goods with the EU was USD 137.41 billion in 2023-24, making it the largest trading partner of India for goods. In addition, the bilateral trade in services, in 2023, between India and the EU was estimated at US$ 51.45 billion. The trade agreement with the EU would help India in further expanding and diversifying its exports of goods and services while securing the value chains. India is seeking to forge balanced agreements with major world economies to increase its market share in global trade.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB-IR(GSII)



- The 9th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue took place in New Delhi on December 12, 2024. The meeting was co-chaired by Joint Secretary (International Cooperation) Shri Amitabh Prasad and Thailand's Deputy Permanent Secretary for Defence Gen Tharapong Malakam.
- Both sides agreed for early establishment of Joint Working Group to effectively steer and monitor the cooperation in the areas of defence industry. Both sides also agreed to conduct Subject Matter Experts Exchange between Indian and the Thai Armed Forces to carry forward and institutionalise regular engagement in niche domains.
- The Indian co-chair highlighted the potential of domestic defence industry with capacity and capability to cooperate with the Royal Thai Armed Forces in its defence acquisition plans. Thailand appreciated the capability of Indian defence industry ecosystem and proposed exploring possibilities for co-design, co-production and co-development in the field of defence industry.
- Thailand is a maritime neighbour and a valued partner in India's 'Act East' Policy and the Indo-Pacific region.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Air-IR(GSII)

India-Iran-Armenia Hold Second Trilateral Consultations; Discuss Connectivity, Trade, Regional Development

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2nd India-Iran-Armenia Trilateral Consultations

December 12, 2024

The second India-Iran-Armenia Trilateral Consultations were held on 12 December 2024 in New Delhi. Shri J.P Singh, Joint Secretary, PAI Division led the discussions from the Indian side. The delegations from Iran and Armenia were led by H.E. Mr. Hashem Ashja' Zadeh, Director General of South Asia Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and H.E. Ms. Anahit Karapetyan, Head of

- The Second India-Iran-Armenia trilateral consultations were held today in New Delhi. The Ministry of External Affairs in a statement said that discussions were held on connectivity initiatives, engagement in multilateral fora, and regional developments. It also said that the meeting explored ways to promote trade, tourism and cultural exchanges while strengthening people-to-people ties.
- The Ministry also added that the delegations emphasised the need for fostering close cooperation under the International North-South Transport Corridor and highlighted the role of Chabahar Port. It also mentioned that the three sides reiterated their commitment to continued cooperation and it was agreed that the next round of trilateral consultations will be held in Iran.
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HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Air-IR(GSII)

- Romania and Bulgaria are set to fully join the European Union border-free Schengen Area on January 1, 2025. Roberta Metsola, President of the European Parliament in a post on social media congratulated the people of both countries. She added a stronger Schengen signifies a safer & more united Europe.
- Notably, the border-free Schengen Area guarantees free movement to more than 425 million European Union citizens, along with non-EU nationals living in the EU or visiting the EU. The Schengen provisions abolish checks at the EU's internal borders while providing a single set of rules for controls at the external borders applicable to those who enter the Schengen area for up to 90 days.
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