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INDIA-SRI LANKA VIRTUAL BILATERAL SUMMIT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Sri Lankan counterpart Mahinda Rajapaksa held the first-ever India-Sri Lanka Virtual Bilateral Summit.



About:

PM Modi announced a grant assistance of 15 million dollars to Sri Lanka for the promotion of Buddhist ties between India and Sri Lanka. The grant will assist in deepening people-to-people linkages between the two countries in the sphere of Buddhism.

- They agreed that the Indian side would facilitate the visit of a delegation of Buddhist pilgrims from Sri Lanka in the first inaugural flight to Sacred City of Kushinagar. Kushinagar Airport was designated as an international airport recently recognizing its importance as a Buddhist site. Both sides also agreed to explore opportunities in the areas of Ayurveda and Yoga.
- India and Sri Lanka have reached an understanding to extend the MoU on High Impact Community Development Projects for a five-year period beginning 2020.
- Both leaders agreed to continue the successful Indian housing project and gave instructions to the relevant officials to fast-track the construction of 10,000 houses in the plantation sector. Prime Minister Modi emphasized that implementation of the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution is essential for carrying forward the process of peace and reconciliation and realizing the expectations of Tamils for equality.

IARI, GOGAMUKH

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated the new Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), Gogamukh, Assam campus. IARI, Assam will be named after Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya.



About:

The Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) is India's national Institute for agricultural research, education and extension. The institute based in Delhi is financed and administered by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

The IARI was responsible for the research leading to the "Green Revolution in India" of the 1970s.

It has been realized that this is an opportune time to replicate the success of IARI in the Eastern Part of the country. In view of this, the Union Finance Minister in his maiden budget speech had announced the establishment of IARI like institutes in Jharkhand and

Assam on July 10, 2014.



- Accordingly Government of Assam provided land for establishing this Institution at Dirpai Chapori, Gogamukh circle, Dhemaji district of Assam covering an area of about 585 acres of land.
- The selected site is located at about 430 km from the state capital Dispur, 45 km from Dhemaji town (District Headquarter) and 100 km from Dibrugarh, the second largest town of Assam.

CYANOBACTERIA

Toxins in water produced by cyanobacteria killed more than 300 elephants in Botswana this year, officials said while announcing the result of an investigation into the deaths which had baffled conservationists.



About:

Cyanobacteria are microscopic organisms common in water and sometimes found in soil.

Cyanobacteria are a group of photosynthetic bacteria, some of which are nitrogen-fixing, that live either freely or in a symbiotic relationship with plants or lichen-forming fungi.

Not all produce toxins but scientists say toxic ones are occurring more frequently as climate change drives up global temperatures. Some cyanobacterial blooms can harm people and

animals and scientists are concerned about their potential impact as climate change leads to warmer water temperatures, which many cyanobacteria prefer.

The number of dead elephants had risen to 330, from 281 reported in July.

INDIAN MUSEUM

Renovation works at the Indian Museum in Kolkata were carried out without following the necessary conservation process, leading to priceless artefacts being damaged, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has found.

About:



Indian museum is the **earliest and the largest multipurpose Museum** not only in the **Indian subcontinent** but also in the **Asia-Pacific region of the world.**

Background: It was established in **1814** under the guidance of Dr. Nathaniel Wallich at the **Asiatic Society.**

- **Location:** Kolkata. **Administration:** It is under the Ministry of Culture, Government of India.
- **Name:** The museum which was known in the beginning as the "**Asiatic Society Museum**" subsequently came to be known as the "**Imperial Museum**" later familiarized as the "**Indian Museum**". The museum is more familiar by the name **Jadughar or Ajabghar** among the visitors.

EXTERNAL DEBT

India's total external debt increased by 2.8% to \$558.5 billion at the end of March mainly on account of a rise in commercial borrowings, a Finance Ministry report showed. External debt was \$543 billion a year earlier.



About:

The ratio of foreign currency reserves to external debt stood at 85.5% as at end-March, compared to 76% in 2019 March.

External debt as a ratio to GDP rose marginally to 20.6%, from 19.8 %, 'India's External Debt: A Status Report: 2019-2020' showed.

- Sovereign debt shrank 3% to \$100.9 billion. This decrease was primarily due to a fall in FII investment in G-Secs — the second-largest constituent — by 23.3% to \$21.6 billion, from \$28.3 billion in 2019.
- Loans from multilateral and bilateral sources under external assistance — the largest constituent of sovereign debt — grew 4.9% to \$87.2 billion.
- Non-sovereign debt, on the other hand, rose 4.2% to \$457.7 billion mainly due to an increase in commercial borrowings — the largest constituent — by 6.7% to \$220.3 billion. Outstanding NRI deposits — the second-largest constituent — at \$130.6 billion was almost equal to the level a year earlier. Non-financial corporations accounted for 42% of total debt.

JNANPITH AWARD

The 55th Jnanpith award announced in November 2019 was handed over to poet Akkitham



Achuthan Namboothiri. Akkitham became the sixth writer to bring Jnanpith to Malayalam literature. The COVID-19 lockdown delayed the award ceremony.

About:

Jnanpith Award is given by Bharatiya Jnanpith, a literary and research organization based in Delhi.

It is given annually to an author for their

"outstanding contribution towards literature".

- It is bestowed **only on Indian writers writing in Indian languages included in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India and English.**
- **Instituted in:**
- There are **no posthumous conferral.** Also only works published during the preceding twenty years is considered for the award.
- The award consists of cash prize is ₹11 lakh and a Bronze replica of Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and wisdom.

PRITILATA WADDEDAR

The government of Bangladesh is financing a film on the life of revolutionary freedom fighter Pritilata Waddedar.



About:

Pritilata Waddedar (1911 – 1932) was a Bengali revolutionary nationalist who was influential in the Indian independence movement.

After completing her education in Chittagong and Dhaka, she attended Bethune College in Kolkata. She graduated in philosophy with distinction and became a school teacher.

- Pritilata joined a revolutionary group headed by Surya Sen. She is known for leading fifteen revolutionaries in the 1932 armed attack on the Pahartali European Club, during which one person was killed and eleven injured.
- The revolutionaries torched the club and were later caught by the British police. To avoid arrest, Pritilata consumed cyanide and died.

MAGAWA



A rat called Magawa was awarded the PDSA Gold Medal for his “life-saving” work in Cambodia.

About:

Magawa who is an African Giant Pouched Rat and is just under eight years old, is the first rat to win this medal and was given the award by PDSA’s Director-General.

PDSA was founded in 1917 by animal welfare pioneer Maria Dickin and is one of the UK’s leading veterinary charities.

- The PDSA Gold Medal was initiated in 2002 and rewards civilian acts of animal bravery and “devotion to duty”. It is the highest honour recognising extraordinary bravery of animals.
- The medal has been awarded to over 30 animals so far. All other recipients are dogs.
- Till now, Magawa has discovered over 39 landmines and 28 items of unexploded ordnance to date.