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Current Affairs

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Today's Important News

Atlas V rocket launches SBIRS
Geo-5 missile warning satellite
for US Space Force

1. Atlas V rocket launches SBIRS Geo-5 missile warning satellite for US Space Force

- United Launch Alliance (ULA) launched an Atlas V rocket into space today (May 18), marking the first launch of the year for the company.
- The two-stage rocket blasted off from Space Launch Complex 41 here at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida at 1:37 p.m. EDT (1737 GMT), following a 24-hour delay due to an issue with the rocket's liquid oxygen system. Perched atop the 194-foot-tall (59 meters) launcher is a missile-warning satellite for the U.S. Space Force.
- The weather forecast improved to 90% favorable for Tuesday's launch, with nothing but blue skies over the space coast.



Foot Notes:

About United Launch Alliance:

CEO: Tory Bruno

Founded: 1 December 2006

Headquarters: Centennial, Colorado (United States)

Founders: Lockheed Martin, Boeing

2. Iran Developed its most Powerful Supercomputer "Simorgh"

- Iran has unveiled a new supercomputer named 'Simorgh', which is 100 times more powerful than previous supercomputer of the country till date.
- The supercomputer has been developed indigenously by Tehran's Amirkabir University of Technology (AUT).
- It has been named after a mythical Phoenix-like bird 'Simurgh'.
- Currently, Simorgh has a performance capacity of 0.56 petaflops,
- However the country claims this capacity to reach one petaflops in two months.
- The supercomputer will be used for artificial intelligence workloads, traffic and weather data, and image processing.



Foot Notes:

About Iran:

Capital: Tehran

Currency: Iranian rial

President: Hassan Rouhani

3. MCCIA and NABARD launch India's first Agriculture Export Facilitation Center (AEFC)

- Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce Industries and Agriculture (MCCIA), in association with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), launched India's first Agriculture Export Facilitation Center (AEFC).
- Dr. G.R. Chintala, Chairman, NABARD, inaugurated the center in a virtual program organized by MCCIA. Mr. Umesh Chandra Sarangi, (IAS Retd.), Chairman, Agriculture and Agricultural Business Committee, MCCIA; Mr. Dheeraj Kumar (IAS), Agriculture Commissioner, Maharashtra; Mr. Sudhir Mehta, President, MCCIA and Mr. Prashant Girbane, Director General MCCIA were also present for the inauguration program. Mr. Ajinkya Rahane, Vice-Captain of the Indian Cricket Team, also marked his presence as a special guest through the virtual platform and encouraged the organizers and the participants and wished it all the success as its aims to boost farmer's income through increasing exports.



4. Manipur launched mobile app 'MOMA Market' for delivering veggies at home

- In Manipur, Chief Minister, N Biren Singh launched a mobile application named 'MOMA Market' for home delivery of fresh vegetables, for day to day consumption, amid COVID pandemic.



- Currently the application can be downloaded from www.momamarket.com and will be available on Google Play Store soon.
- The application has been introduced by Manipur Organic Mission Agency (MOMA), Department of Horticulture and Soil Conservation, Manipur.
- The initiative will help to prevent vegetable losses and curb the distress sales of farm produces during lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Foot Notes:

About Manipur:

Capital: Imphal (Executive Branch)

Governor: Najma Heptulla

Chief Minister: N. Biren Singh

5. Govt brings changed in Customs Rules to boost trade facilitation

- Govt has brought changes in the existing Customs (Import of Goods at Concessional Rate of Duty) Rules, IGCR 2017 to boost trade facilitation
- The changes has been introduced by Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs through Customs (Import of Goods at Concessional Rate of Duty) Amendment Rules, 2021.
- Importers who do not have any manufacturing facility can now avail IGCR, 2017 to import goods at concessional Customs duty excluding gold, precious stones, etc.



6. CoWIN platform will now be available in Hindi and regional languages

- CoWIN platform is now being made available in Hindi and 14 regional languages from next week.
- This move has been announced at the 26th meeting of high-level Group of Ministers on COVID-19 in Delhi
- CoWIN platform (cowin.gov.in):
- Used for registration for COVID-19 Vaccination
- It is handling minute details for India's COVID-19 immunisation programme, including registration, vaccination centres.
- All citizens aged 18 years and above can register for vaccination



7. Book titled 'Sikkim: A History of Intrigue and Alliance' released

- A book titled as 'Sikkim: A History of Intrigue and Alliance' has been released on the occasion of Sikkim Day (May 16)
- The book has been written by former diplomat Preet Mohan Singh Malik and has been published by HarperCollins India.
- The book narrates the unique history of the erstwhile kingdom of Sikkim with the intriguing story of how it became India's 22nd state.
- It also shows relationship between Lepchas (Rongpas) and the Bhutias tribe.



8. Nuklu Phom of Nagaland wins 2021 Whitley Awards

- Conservationist, Y. Nuklu Phom (Longleng of Nagaland) has been conferred
- with Whitley Awards 2021 for his efforts to create community-owned forests in Nagaland and protect rare Amur falcons species.
- He is one among the six winners chosen for this Awards and also the first Indian to win the honour.



Foot Notes:

About Nagaland:

Capital: Kohima

Governor: R.N. Ravi

Chief Minister: Neiphiu Rio

9. Kobe Bryant Inducted Posthumously Into Basketball Hall Of Fame 2020

- Los Angeles Lakers icon Kobe Bryant was inducted posthumously into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame on Saturday part of a star-studded group that also included Tim Duncan and Kevin Garnett.
- Bryant was inducted as part of the Class of 2020, almost 16 months after he and his 13-year-old daughter Gianna were killed in a helicopter crash along with seven others in southern California. Bryant's wife, Vanessa Bryant, took the podium Saturday to speak movingly about his love for basketball, his family, his teammates and his fans.



10. Former union minister and BJP leader Chaman Lal Gupta passed away

- Veteran BJP leader and former union minister Chaman Lal Gupta died after a
- prolonged illness at his Gandhi Nagar residence on 18th May, days after undergoing successful treatment for Covid-19 at a hospital, his family said.



- Gupta (87) is survived by his two sons and a daughter.
- Born in Jammu on April 13, 1934, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader was not in good health for the last couple of years as he was suffering from various ailments and was hardly seen in public life.

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