



Current Affairs

11th April, 2024

Today's Important News

Simon Harris becomes Ireland's Youngest-ever Prime Minister

1. Simon Harris becomes Ireland's Youngest-ever Prime Minister

- Simon Harris, aged 37, has been elected as Ireland's youngest-ever prime minister, succeeding Leo Varadkar who resigned last month. Harris, a former health and higher education minister, secured the nomination with a vote of 88-69 in parliament, garnering support from independent lawmakers, as well as his coalition partners Fianna Fail and the Green Party.
- Harris's rise within the Fine Gael party has been rapid. Joining its youth branch at 16, he became a county councillor at 22 and entered parliament at 24, earning him the nickname "Baby of the Dail."



Foot Note:

About Ireland:

Prime Minister: Simon Harris

Capital: Dublin

2. ECI holds 'Conference on Low Voter Turnout' to increase voter turnout in LS Elections

- In a first-of-its-kind initiative, the Election Commission of India (ECI) held a ‘Conference on Low Voter Turnout’ with Municipal Commissioners and District Education Officers (DEO) from select districts to increase voter turnout in the ensuing Lok Sabha Elections.
- Ahead of the polling in the ongoing general elections in 2024, the poll body has accelerated efforts to enhance voter turnout in parliamentary constituencies (PCs) with a history of low poll participation in previous general elections.



3. Central & state GST officials to conduct joint audits of firms

- In a move that is expected to help businesses as well as reduce litigation, a Model All India GST Audit Manual 2023 has been finalised for use by the Centre and state tax. The norms, which were placed before the GST Council in February, are likely to be taken up for audit cases from this fiscal.
- The manual lays out standard principles for the selection of audit cases, preparation and conduct of audit as well as post-audit follow-up, which is expected to help both the Central and state GST officials to carry out the process in a uniform manner.



4. National Safe Motherhood day observed on 11th April

- The journey of motherhood is a special one and it comes with both joy and responsibility. Every year, National Safe Motherhood Day is observed on April 11 to highlight the importance of maternal health and wellness and reduce maternal mortality rate in the country.
- The Government of India officially recognised the day as National Safe Motherhood Day in 2003. The day also marks the birth anniversary of Kasturba Gandhi. A pregnant woman should have a positive experience at each stage of pregnancy to ensure her child is born healthy. Maternal well-being is a comprehensive effort to reduce maternal mortality.



5. HDFC Bank Becomes First Private Bank to Open Branch in Lakshadweep

- Private lender HDFC Bank has opened a branch at Kavaratti Island in Lakshadweep, making it the only private sector bank to have a presence in the Union Territory. This branch is aimed at upgrading the banking infrastructure in

Lakshadweep by offering a wide range of services with a focus on personal banking and digital banking solutions.

- The branch will provide customized digital solutions, including QR-based transactions for retailers, to cater to the financial needs of individuals, families, and businesses in the region.



Foot Note:

About HDFC Bank:

CEO: Sashidhar Jagdishan

Founded: August 1994

Headquarters: Mumbai

6. Right against climate change is interlinked to Articles 21 and 14

- The Supreme Court of India on April 5, 2024, for the first time, recognised the right against the adverse impacts of climate change, saying it is intertwined with the right to life and equality that are embedded in the Indian constitution. The arguments were a part of a verdict by a three-judge bench headed by the Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud hearing a case on the conservation of the great India bustard and the lesser florican.
- The court said that only allowing underground power transmission cables in such a large area, which also has an incredible potential for clean energy such as wind and solar, will severely impact the country's clean energy shift that is necessary to attain its climate goals.



7. India's nominee Jagjit Pavadia re-elected to International Narcotics Control Board

- India's nominee Jagjit Pavadia has been re-elected to the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) for the term 2025-2030, securing the highest number of votes in the elections conducted by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).
- External affairs minister S Jaishankar commended the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations and the Ministry of external affairs for their efforts.



8. Peter Higgs, who proposed existence of Higgs boson particle, has died

- Peter Higgs, the European scientist who won the 2013 Nobel Prize in Physics for describing the Higgs boson (God particle)—a theoretical particle that explains where mass comes from and advances man’s understanding of how the world is constructed—died on April 8 at the age of 94 after a short illness.
- Confirming the death of the eminent scientist The University of Edinburgh posted on the microblogging platform X (formerly known as Twitter), “We are sad to announce the death of Professor Peter Higgs, who has passed away at the age of 94.”



9. George Lucas to receive honorary Palme d’Or at 2024 Cannes Film Festival

- Hollywood veteran George Lucas will be felicitated with an honorary Palme d’Or at the 2024 Cannes Film Festival, the festival organisers have announced. Lucas, best known for creating the long-running and smash hit franchises Star Wars and Indiana Jones, will receive the honour at the closing ceremony of the film gala on May 25.
- “The Festival de Cannes has always held a special place in my heart,” Lucas said in a statement. “I was surprised and elated when my first film, THX-1138, was selected to be shown in a new program for first time directors called the Directors’ Fortnight. Since then, I have returned to the festival on many occasions in a variety of capacities as a writer, director and producer.



10. Harendra Singh Appointed as Coach of Indian Women’s Hockey Team Until 2028 Olympics


- Former Indian hockey player and Dronacharya awardee Harendra Singh has been selected by Hockey India as the coach of the senior national women’s hockey team. He will replace Janneke Schopman, a former Dutch hockey player, who resigned last month as the coach of the national women’s team after the Indian team failed to qualify for the Paris Olympics 2024.
- Harendra Singh started his coaching career with the French club HC Lyon’s junior team in 1995. He was appointed head coach of the Indian men’s junior team in 2014 and successfully coached them to win the 2016 men’s Junior World Cup in Lucknow.



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