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Current Affairs
06 Nov, 2024

Japan Launches World's First Wooden Satellite



The image shows a small, cube-shaped satellite with a wooden exterior and a solar panel on top, floating in space against the Earth's horizon.

1. Japan Launches World's First Wooden Satellite

Japanese scientists have launched LignoSat, the world's first wooden satellite, in a groundbreaking experiment in sustainable space technology. Created through a collaboration between Kyoto University and Sumitomo Forestry, this satellite aims to test the viability of timber, specifically honoki wood, for future space habitats and structures. The project seeks to explore wood's durability in the harsh environment of space, potentially advancing the use of renewable resources for long-term human settlements beyond Earth.



Foot notes:

- LignoSat was developed by Kyoto University, led by astronaut Professor Takao Doi, in partnership with Sumitomo Forestry.
- The satellite was launched to the ISS via a SpaceX mission and will orbit 400 km above Earth for six months.
- Made from honoki wood (Japanese magnolia), chosen for its durability, as proven in a 10-month ISS study.
- Inspired by early wooden aircraft, LignoSat was built without screws or glue, highlighting Japanese craftsmanship and sustainable design.
- LignoSat meets NASA-certified standards for space materials, supporting the use of renewable resources in space and reducing environmental impact.

2. Bihar's Sultanganj railway station renamed as Ajgaibinath Dham

Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary announced on Monday that Sultanganj railway station in the Bhagalpur district will be renamed after the revered Hindu shrine, Ajgaibinath Dham. This decision underscores the government's commitment to honoring the region's cultural and religious heritage. During an event in Bhagalpur, Choudhary revealed, "The Sultanganj railway station will soon carry the name of Ajgaibinath Dham. A proposal for this change has already been passed by the municipal council and will be forwarded to the appropriate authorities for approval."



Foot notes:

- Deputy CM Samrat Choudhary announced that the proposal to rename Sultanganj station as Ajgaibinath Dham was approved by the municipal body and will soon be sent for official approval.
- The Ajgaibinath Temple, located on the banks of the Ganga in Sultanganj, is an ancient temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, known for its intricate stone carvings and inscriptions.
- Bihar BJP state president and revenue and land reforms minister Dilip Jaiswal, along with Deputy CMs Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha, inaugurated the event by lighting a lamp.
- A total of 159 service organizations and individuals were honored at the event, including participants from around 10 states.

3. Bandhan Financial Services acquires Genisys Group to broaden its international Presence

Bandhan Group has entered the technology sector by acquiring Genisys Group, a global leader in IT and business process services. This acquisition expands Bandhan Group's presence in key international markets, including the U.S., UK, and India, with new offices planned in these regions. The integration of Genisys Group brings a comprehensive range of solutions to Bandhan, including digital transformation services, data analytics, cloud computing, digital media operations, and smart business process solutions.



Foot notes:

- Genisys Group specializes in IT and AI-driven solutions, using cloud technologies and automation for digital transformation.
- The company focuses on agile delivery and innovation to help businesses enhance performance and extract actionable insights from data.

- Genisys offers services such as digital application lifecycle management, cloud-native solutions, data management, digital media operations, and business process outsourcing.
- Bandhan Financial Services promotes Bandhan Financial Holdings Limited and Bandhan Bank Limited, with BFSL being an NBFC-NDSI-CIC registered with the Reserve Bank of India.
- Bandhan AMC and Bandhan Life are subsidiaries of BFSL.

4. AIPA athletes won Gold and Silver medals at Asia Pickleball Games

Indian athletes made a strong impact at the 2024 Asia Pickleball Games, securing multiple gold, silver, and bronze medals and highlighting India's growing prominence in the sport. Notable victories include Nitten Kirttane's gold in the 50+ Open Men's Singles and the gold won by the duo of Vanshik Kapadia and Vrushali Thakare in the 19+ Open Mixed Doubles. The event was organized by the Asia Federation of Pickleball in partnership with the Chinese Taipei Pickleball Association.



Foot notes:

- Among the top performances, Nitten Kirttane won gold in the 50+ Open Men's Singles, with Vishal Jadhav taking silver in the 35+ Open Men's Singles.
- In the women's 4.0 category, Khushi Sachdeva and Shraddha Damani claimed silver in the 19+ and 35+ singles, respectively, while Sandeep Tawde earned silver in the 50+ men's singles 4.0 category.
- In doubles, Nitten Kirttane and Sandeep Tawde secured gold in the 50+ Open Men's Doubles and Vanshik Kapadia and Tejas Mahajan won gold in the 19+ Open Men's Doubles.
- In mixed doubles, Vanshik Kapadia and Vrushali Thakare captured gold in the 19+ Open, and Vishal Jadhav and Isha Lakhani took gold in the 35+ Open.

5. Tanushree clinches Silver Medal at World Soft Tennis Championship

India's Tanushree Pandey secured a Silver Medal at the World Soft Tennis Championship in Jingshan, China. She narrowly lost to Chiang Min Yu from Chinese Taipei, 3-4, in the Under-21 Women's Individual Singles final. Earlier, Tanushree had claimed a hard-fought victory over her Japanese opponent in the semifinal, winning 4-3.



Foot notes:

- Tanushree narrowly lost in the Under-21 Women's Individual Singles final to Chiang Min Yu of Chinese Taipei, with a score of 3-4.
- Earlier, she defeated a Japanese player in a close semifinal, winning 4-3.
- Her achievement highlights India's growing presence in international soft tennis.

6. IndiGo Co-founder Gangwal Named as Chairman of Southwest Airlines Board

Rakesh Gangwal, co-founder of IndiGo, has been named Chairman of Southwest Airlines after joining its board in July and acquiring \$108 million worth of shares. This appointment follows Southwest Airlines' recent agreement with Elliott Investment Management, a key shareholder advocating for substantial changes at the airline.



Foot notes:

- Rakesh Gangwal's aviation career began at United Airlines in 1984; he later became President and CEO of US Airways Group and led Worldspan Technologies as Chairman and CEO.
- An IIT Kanpur alumnus, he donated ₹100 crore in 2022 to establish a School of Medical Sciences and Technology.
- Gangwal co-founded IndiGo but had a falling out with co-founder Rahul Bhatia, leading to a public dispute in 2019.
- He resigned from InterGlobe Aviation's board in 2022 and started reducing his stake.
- In August 2024, Gangwal and his family trust sold 5.83% of their stake in IndiGo for 10,500 crore, reducing their holdings in InterGlobe Aviation to 13.55% from 19.38%.

7. Election Commission appoints Sanjay Verma as Maharashtra's police chief

The Election Commission of India has appointed Sanjay Kumar Verma as the new Director General of Police for Maharashtra, following the removal of Rashmi Shukla amid multiple complaints from opposition parties. Verma, a 1990-batch IPS officer, currently holds the position of Director General of Legal and Technical. His appointment comes just ahead of the Maharashtra assembly elections scheduled for later this month.



Foot notes:

- 1990-batch IPS officer Sanjay Kumar Verma will serve as Maharashtra's DGP temporarily during the state elections.
- Rashmi Shukla, currently on a three-week compulsory leave, will resume her DGP role after elections and the MCC period.

- 1988-batch IPS officer, and Maharashtra's first female police chief.
- Previously faced allegations of unauthorized phone tapping of MVA leaders while heading the State Intelligence Department.

8. VD Chafekar appointed as Executive Director of Recap ISC

The Governing Council of the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP ISC) has appointed retired Indian Coast Guard Additional Director General VD Chafekar as its seventh Executive Director. Chafekar's tenure, set from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2028, represents a significant step in strengthening India's contribution to regional maritime security.



Foot notes:

- Chafekar's appointment highlights India's commitment to enhancing regional cooperation and securing the Indo-Pacific.
- His leadership at ReCAAP ISC aims to strengthen collaborative efforts against maritime threats like piracy and armed robbery.
- Established in 2006, it is Asia's first intergovernmental framework for maritime security cooperation.
- Focuses on information sharing, capacity building, and regional coordination to tackle maritime safety challenges.
- India, a founding member, has contributed expertise and resources to support ReCAAP ISC's mission in safeguarding Asian waters.

9. International Day for Preventing Exploitation of Environment in War and Armed Conflict 2024 observed on 6th November

The International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict is observed on November 6th each year. Declared by the United Nations General Assembly in 2001, the day acknowledges that the environment often suffers during conflicts, and the destruction of natural resources can hinder lasting peace. Environmental exploitation in war includes actions such as polluting water wells, setting crops on fire, deforestation, poisoning soils, and killing wildlife to gain a military advantage.



Foot notes:

- In 2016, the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) adopted a resolution recognizing healthy ecosystems' role in reducing armed conflict risks.

- International humanitarian law (IHL) aims to protect the natural environment during armed conflict, with the Geneva Conventions prohibiting "widespread, long-term, and severe damage" to the environment, though enforcement remains difficult.
- The burden of proof for environmental destruction under IHL is high, limiting accountability.
- Experts suggest the environment should be recognized as worthy of protection on its own, beyond its impact on human well-being.
- The UN encourages nations and international bodies to take proactive steps to reduce environmental damage in conflict zones: Preventing conflict escalation by addressing root causes.

10. Kiki Hakansson, First Miss World passed away

Kiki Hakansson, the first-ever Miss World crowned in 1951, passed away peacefully in her sleep at her California home at the age of 95. Born in Sweden, Hakansson made history at the inaugural Miss World pageant in London, which was initially conceived as a one-time event but went on to become a prestigious global institution.



Foot notes:

- Kiki Hakansson, the first Miss World, remains an enduring inspiration for young women worldwide, symbolizing women's empowerment.
- Crowned Miss World in 1951 at the inaugural pageant in London, she made history for Sweden and for women globally.
- The event, initially planned as a one-time pageant for the Festival of Britain, took place on July 29, 1951, at the Lyceum Ballroom.
- Kiki's win marked the start of the Miss World legacy, a global institution that continues to thrive.
- Her impact on those she met and the lives she touched during her reign is fondly remembered and celebrated.

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