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Important News: International

South Korea Bans Trade Of Dog Meat

Why in News:

- The slaughter and sale of dogs for their meat is to become illegal in South Korea after a new law.

Key Points:

- South Korea passes law banning dog meat trade.
- The legislation, set to come into force by 2027, aims to end the centuries-old practice of humans eating dog meat.
- Dog meat stew, called "boshintang", is considered a delicacy among some older South Koreans, but the meat has fallen out of favour with diners and is no longer popular with young people.
- The new law focuses on the dog meat trade - those convicted of butchering dogs face up to three years in prison, while people found guilty of raising dogs for meat or selling dog meat could serve a maximum of two years.
- According to government statistics, South Korea had around 1,600 dog meat restaurants and 1,150 dog farms in 2023, all of which will now have to submit a plan to phase out their businesses to their local authorities.

Source: BBC

Mauritius and Bangladesh Join India's 43rd Antarctic Expedition

Why in News:

- Scientists from Mauritius and Bangladesh have joined India's 43rd Antarctic Expedition.

Key Points:

- Fostering maritime collaboration, two scientists from Mauritius and one from Bangladesh have joined the 43rd Antarctic expedition of India, led by the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research in Goa.
- The scientists boarded the vessel in Cape Town on December 20, 2023, marking a significant stride in international cooperation in polar research.



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- This collaborative effort stems from the maiden Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) Oceanographers and Hydrographers conference held in Goa and Hyderabad in November 2022.
- The conference laid the foundation for scientific partnerships among the CSC nations, facilitating joint initiatives for oceanographic and hydrographic studies.
- Previously, scientists from the CSC nations embarked on a month-long scientific expedition in the Indian Ocean Region in June 2023 aboard the 'Sagar Nidhi,' further strengthening the bonds of collaboration.
- The scientists joining the Antarctic expedition will be actively engaged for a period of 3-4 months, undertaking collaborative research across various disciplines related to polar science.

Source: DD News

Tshering Tobgay Re-Elected As Bhutan's Prime Minister

Why in News:

- Bhutanese voters have elected Tshering Tobgay to become prime minister for a second time.

Key Points:

- Tshering Tobgay's party, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), scored a nearly two-thirds of seats victory in Bhutan's parliamentary elections.
- The party clinched almost a two-thirds majority, winning 30 seats of the 47 national assembly seats to return to power. The Bhutan Tendrel Party (BTP) navigated its way through the competitive landscape, securing 17 seats.
- In this election was dominated by serious economic challenges that have called into question the Himalayan kingdom's long-standing policy of prioritising "Gross National Happiness" over growth.
- Bhutan also lies sandwiched between the globe's two most populous countries, China and India, who watched the vote with keen interest as they eye strategic contested border zones.

Source: The Hindu



Important News: National

Chhattisgarh Launches "Ramlala Darshan" Scheme

Why in News:

- The Vishnu Deo Sai government in Chhattisgarh has approved its Ram Lala Darshan (Ayodhya Dham) Yojana.

Key Points:

- Under the scheme, 20,000 eligible residents of the State would be taken to the holy city for pilgrimage every year.
- From different points in Chhattisgarh, batches of pilgrims will be taken to the main destination of Ayodhya Dham in Uttar Pradesh in trains.
- The trip will also include a visit to Varanasi where they will go to Kashi Vishwanath Temple Corridor and witness the Ganga Aarti.
- The distance to be covered under this trip to Ayodhya will be approximately 900 kilometers, for which an MoU will be signed between the Chhattisgarh Tourism Board and the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation.
- The launch of the scheme was one of the promises made by the Bharatiya Janata Party ahead of the elections late last year.
- The Chhattisgarh Tourism Board will implement the scheme and the budget for it will be provided by the Tourism Department.
- Those between the ages of 18 and 75 years and found fit in the health examination by the District Medical Board will be considered eligible for the trip under this scheme.
- In the first phase, however, this facility will be made available for people of age above 55 years.

Source: The Hindu



PM Modi to Ignite Youth Potential at 27th National Youth Festival

Why in News:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 27th National Youth Festival in Nashik, Maharashtra, on January 12th, 2024 and will address the youth of the nation.

Key Points:

- In Maharashtra, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 27th National Youth Festival in Nashik to mark National Youth Day on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda on January 12th, 2024.
- The theme of this festival is “MYBharat-ViksitBharat@2047 – By the Youth, For the Youth,”
- This year, National Youth Day will be celebrated by all field organisations of the Department of Youth Affairs in districts pan-India in collaboration with multiple Government departments. ‘MY Bharat’ volunteers throughout the country, with support from NSS units, NYKS and many educational institutions will coordinate their energies to carry out activities to volunteer for India. Youth Clubs will also bring their vibrant energy to the celebration, ensuring a truly inclusive atmosphere. More than 88,000 volunteers will participate in the campaign.
- Volunteers are registered for these events through MY Bharat digital platform (<https://mybharat.gov.in>). Road safety awareness events will be conducted at major cities and 750 districts headquarters of the country on 12th January.
- Across 763 districts of the country, a district level mega program on National Youth Day 2024 will begin with a reverent floral tribute to Swami Vivekananda.

Source: PIB



Senthil Pandian C Appointed As India's WTO Ambassador

Why in News:

- The Indian government has appointed IAS officer Senthil Pandian C as ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva after Brajendra Navnit's tenure as India's ambassador to the global trade watchdog ends on March 31, 2024.

Key Points:

- The central government appointed UP cadre officer Senthil Pandian C as India's ambassador to the World Trade Organization. He will replace Brajendra Navnit after his tenure ends by March-end and will continue to lead India's negotiations until the multilateral body's ministerial meeting scheduled for February-end.
- With the world economy characterized by inflation, rising interest rates, and geopolitical concerns, Ambassador Pandian's appointment is taking place against this backdrop. The intricate landscape that these variables have produced for global trade demands skillful diplomatic and strategic maneuvering.

Source: The Times of India



Important News: Defence

Navy gets first India-made long endurance Drishti 10 Starliner drone

Why in News:

- The Indian Navy has acquired its inaugural indigenous MALE drone, the Drishti 10 Starliner UAV.

Key Points:

- The Indian Navy recently got its first indigenous medium-altitude long-endurance (MALE) drone, the Drishti 10 Starliner unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), which will boost its intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.
- Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar said the drone will be a potent force multiplier in the Indian Ocean region that faces an array of security challenges.
- The Drishti 10 Starliner drone has been built by Adani Defence and Aerospace at its Hyderabad facility with technology transfer from Israeli defence firm Elbit Systems.
- Drishti 10 Starliner is a variant of Elbit Systems' Hermes 900 Starliner drones.
- The all-weather Drishti 10 Starliner is 70% indigenous, has an endurance of 36 hours and can carry a payload of 450 kg.
- The UAV has a service ceiling of 30,000 feet.

Source: Hindustan Times



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Important News: Day

National Human Trafficking Awareness Day 2024

Why in News:

- National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is celebrated every year on 11 January.

Key Points:

- Every year, National Human Trafficking Awareness Day is celebrated on January 11. This year, the special day was observed on a Thursday.
- The purpose of the day is to raise awareness about the condition of human trafficking victims, as well as to promote and safeguard their rights.
- Every year, lakhs of people are displaced and trafficked from their homes to distant countries. One of the most common forms of human trafficking is for sexual exploitation and mainly targets women. This day is dedicated to raising awareness, tightening security and ensuring that people are not trafficked. It also helps us to understand the plights of the victims and empathise with them and help them get back to a regular life.
- Forced labour, forced criminal activities, forced sexual exploitation, removal of organs and smuggling are some of the reasons why people are trafficked. Slavery still exists in the world, even though sometimes we are not aware of it. In 2007, National Human Trafficking Awareness Day was declared by the United States Senate to be celebrated on January 11. The then President Barack Obama dedicated the entire month of January 2010 for raising awareness about human trafficking.

Source: Hindustan Times

