

NEWS TODAY

UNODC released Annual World Drug Report (2024)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released the report on **World Drug Day** (or International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking).

- ▶ Since 1987 the UN observes World Drug Day on June 26th to **increase action in achieving a drug-free world.**

Key highlights of the report

- ▶ **Rise in drug abuse:** In the decade to 2022, the number of people using illicit drugs increased to 292 million.
- ▶ **Most abused drugs:** Cannabis followed by **opioids, amphetamines, cocaine, and ecstasy.**
- ▶ **Most affected regions:** Criminal activity and trafficking are common in **remote regions with multiple borders and limited governance** such as:
 - ⊕ **Triple Frontier area** (Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay) and **Golden Triangle** (Laos Myanmar and Thailand).
- ▶ **Cannabis legalisation:** Cannabis was legalised across **Canada, Uruguay, and 27 jurisdictions in the US.**
 - ⊕ **THC** (delta9-tetrahydrocannabinol) is believed to be the **main ingredient behind the psychoactive effect of the drug.**
- ▶ **Environmental fallout:** Illegal drug-related activities contribute to **deforestation, toxic waste dumping, and chemical contamination.**

Initiatives against use of illicit drugs

- ▶ **Global**
 - ⊕ **Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)** was established by the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution in 1946.
 - ⊕ **UNODC was established in 1997** to address the interrelated issues of drug control, crime and international terrorism in all its forms.
 - ⊕ **UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1988.**
 - ⊕ **UN Decade Against Drug Abuse (1991-2000)**
- ▶ **India:**
 - ⊕ **Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)** by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
 - ⊕ **Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPA), 1985**

The 18th Lok Sabha Speaker elected by a voice vote

Except on three occasions **1952, 1967 and 1976**, the Speakers in India have been elected unopposed.

- ▶ **Article 93** states that the Lok Sabha shall choose two of its members as **Speaker and Deputy Speaker** on a date fixed by the President.
 - ⊕ It is done by a **simple majority of members** present and voting.

Office of Speaker of Lok Sabha

- ▶ The Speaker is the **presiding officer who is responsible for the day-to-day functioning of the House.**
- ▶ **Term of Office:**
 - ⊕ The Speaker **does not vacate his/her office** until immediately before the first meeting of the Lok Sabha after the dissolution.
 - ⊕ He/she is eligible for re-election.

Responsibilities of the Speaker of Lok Sabha

- ▶ He/she is the **guardian of the rights and privileges** of the House, its committees and members.
- ▶ All matters **which are not specifically provided under the rules** and all questions relating to the working of the rules are regulated by him/her.
- ▶ Uses his/her **power to vote**, in order to resolve a deadlock.
- ▶ Presides over a **joint sitting of the two Houses of Parliament.**
- ▶ Sole authority to decide whether any **Bill is a Money Bill according to Article 110 (4).**

Criticism of the Office of speaker

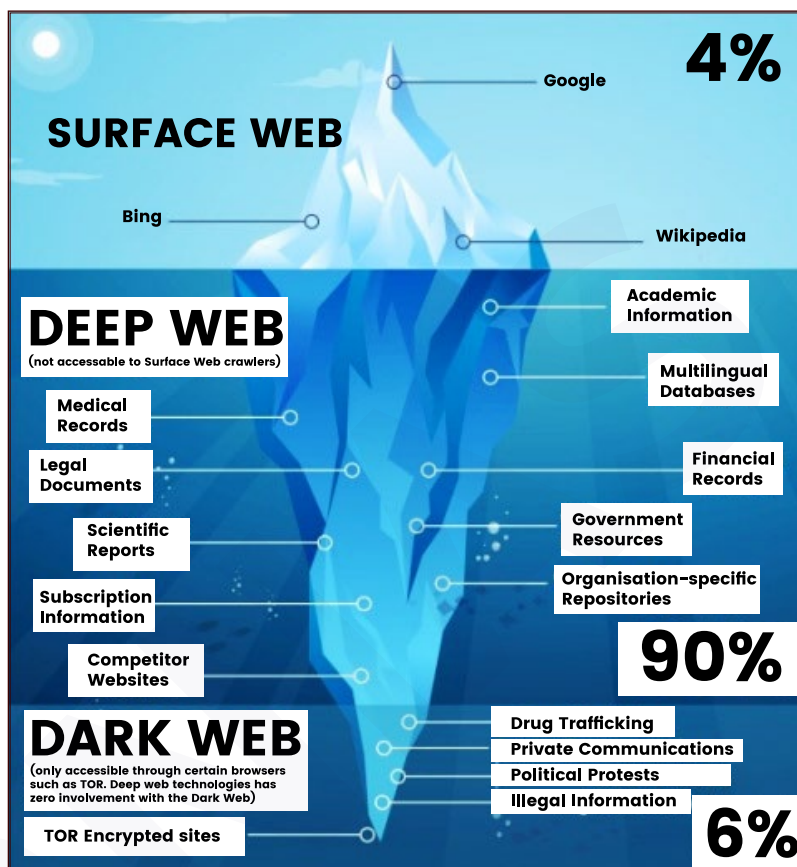
- ▶ In India, the Speaker **continues to enjoy the membership of his/her party** even after being elected as speaker
- ▶ In Britain, the Speaker has to resign **from his political party after election to uphold neutrality**
- ▶ The discretionary powers given to speakers as in case of **Anti defection law or deciding money bill**, can result in biases.

UGC-NET Exam Paper Leaked on Darknet

According to the Centre, paper leak on the darknet led to the cancellation of the UGC-NET exam.

About Darknet (or Dark Web)

- It is that **part of the Internet which cannot be accessed through traditional search engines** like Google nor is it accessible by normal browsers like Chrome or Safari.
 - ⊕ It generally uses **non-standard communication protocols** which make it **inaccessible** to internet service providers (ISPs) or government authorities.
 - ⊕ **Content on DarkNet is encrypted and requires a specific browser** such as TOR (The Onion Ring) browser to access those pages.
- It is a part of the **Deep Web** which includes **sites that are protected by passwords** (refer to the infographic).
- ⊕ Part of the **internet that is readily available to the general public** and searchable on standard search engines is called as **Surface Web**.
- **Applications:** Used by:
 - ⊕ **Journalists and citizens working in oppressive regimes** (to communicate without any government censorship),
 - ⊕ **Researchers and students** to do research on sensitive topics,
 - ⊕ **Law enforcement agencies** etc.
- **Concerns:** Due to anonymity it facilitates **illicit activity, drug dealing, communication by terrorists, child pornography, etc.**



Developing India as the Manufacturing Hub for Electronics Components and Sub-Assemblies- CII report

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) report focuses on transitioning India's Electronics sector ecosystem from an 'import dependent assembly led manufacturing' to 'component level value-added manufacturing'.

Key findings of report:

- **Electronics production is expected to grow** from USD 102 billion in 2023 to USD 500 billion by 2030.
- China accounts for **62% of India's electronic component imports**.
- It identifies **five priority components/sub-assemblies-** batteries (lithium-ion), camera modules, mechanicals (enclosures etc.), displays and Printed Circuit Board.

Challenges for becoming a global hub for components and subassemblies:

- **Higher import tariffs** impacting global competitiveness.
- **India trade agreements are primarily with low consumption and high production countries** leading to trade deficits.
- Domestic industry has **extremely low investment in R&D** leading to lower revenue and manufacturing potential.

Recommendations

- States should make available land at **concessional rates and also provide Plug & Play infrastructure**.
 - ⊕ 'Plug and play' infrastructure refers to **ready facilities in terms of building, power-water-sewage connectivity, road connectivity, etc**
- **Public-private partnership in government funded institutions** to encourage access to infrastructure to smaller companies.
- **Need to rationalize the import tariffs** on priority sub-assemblies and components.

Government initiatives to promote electronic manufacturing

- **The Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI)** for Large Scale Electronics Manufacturing, IT Hardware, etc.
- **Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECs).**
- **Modified Electronics Manufacturing Clusters Scheme (EMC 2.0).**
- **National Policy on Electronics 2019.**

50th years since the Proclamation of National Emergency

On June 25, 1975, the **President declared National Emergency, on the Prime Minister's recommendation**, due to a perceived internal threat.

- Before this, two National Emergency were also proclaimed due to **war with China in 1962 and war with Pakistan in 1971**.

Current Constitutional provisions on National Emergency

- **Proclamation:** Could be proclaimed by the **President on written request of Union Cabinet (Article 352)**.
- **Grounds:** Security of India or any part of it is threatened due to **war, external aggression or armed rebellion**.
- **Parliamentary approval:** Proclamations must be approved by both the Houses of Parliament **within one month**.
- **Duration:** **6 months** since the **proclamation which** can be extended for **another six months** (for any number of times) through a **resolution passed** by both Houses of Parliament.
- **Revocation:** By President

Impact

⊖ Suspension of Fundamental Rights (FR):

- ◆ **State can Suspend Article 19** if the National Emergency is proclaimed due to war or external aggression.
- ◆ President can **suspend the right to move any court for the enforcement FRs** except for Article 20 and Article 21.

⊖ Centralisation of Power

- ◆ **Legislative:** **Parliament** can make **laws for any matter** including those in the State List of the Constitution.
- ◆ **Executive:** Union Government can give direction to the states on the way it should exercise executive power (Art. 353).
- ◆ **Distribution of revenues:** **President can modify provisions of Articles 268 to 279** (related to allocation of financial resources between Union and States). Modification may **last till fiscal year in which such Proclamation ends**.

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange freed by US court

WikiLeaks was founded in 2006 for publishing databases of **censored or otherwise restricted materials involving wars, spying and corruption**.

- In 2010, WikiLeaks featured classified **U.S. military documents and videos** from the war in **Iraq and Afghanistan**.
- It serves as a **whistleblower platform** over the internet.

Whistleblowing: it is the disclosure of information to the public or some higher authority about any wrongdoing, which could be in the form of fraud, corruption, etc. in a company or government.

- It promotes **accountability and transparency, exposes malpractices, protects public interest, etc.**

Ethical issues involved in Wikileaks case

- **Protection of whistleblowers vs. national security:** balance between safeguarding individuals who expose wrongdoing, and ensuring government responsibility while considering threats to national security.
- **Media responsibility in handling classified information:** The media has a moral duty to tell the public about government action, while handling dangerous or sensitive information in a responsible manner.
- **Public right to information vs. government need for confidentiality:** balance between citizens' right to know about government's actions and the government's necessity to uphold confidentiality in matters of national security.

Indian law/rule to protect government secret information

- **The Official Secrets Act, 1923:** It provides the framework for **dealing with espionage, sedition, and other potential threats** to the integrity of the nation.
- **Rule 11 of Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964:** It deals with the Communication of Official Information by the government servants.
- **Section 8(1) in The Right to Information Act, 2005:** It gives exemption from disclosure of information which would **prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India**.

Also in News



Migration and Development Brief 2024

The brief was released by the **World Bank**.

Key highlights

- **Remittance**
 - ⊕ Remittance **flows to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)** reached to **\$656 billion**.
 - ⊕ **Top five recipient countries:** **India (\$120 billion)**, followed by Mexico, China, Philippines, and Pakistan.
- **Migration**
 - ⊕ **Top destinations Countries:** **US, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Russia, and UK**.
 - ⊕ **Largest origin countries:** (18.7 million emigrants) followed by **Ukraine, China, Mexico and Venezuela**.
 - ⊕ **Largest migration corridor:** **Mexico to US**



Space MAITRI mission

NSIL (India) and Space Machines (Australia) signed an agreement to launch Space Machines Company's second Optimus spacecraft.

- **New Space India Limited (NSIL)** is under the Department of Space and the **commercial arm** of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- Second Optimus spacecraft, weighing 450 kg, the **largest Australian-designed and built spacecraft** to date.
 - ⊕ The launch is scheduled for 2026 on **ISRO's Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV)**.

About Space MAITRI (Mission for Australia-India's Technology, Research and Innovation) mission

- It aims to foster closer ties among **commercial, institutional, and governmental space organizations** from both countries in the space domain.



Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

Recently the Ministry of Labour and Employment has taken note of media reports claiming that married women are not being allowed to work at Apple iPhone plant in India.

Equal Remuneration Act, 1976

- It provides for **equal remuneration to men and women workers** for the same work or work of similar nature.
- It **prohibits discrimination** while recruiting men and women workers.
- **The Central Government** may, by notification, make rules for carrying out the provisions of this Act.



Prohibition of Insider Trading (PIT) Regulations

- SEBI has amended PIT regulations to give **flexibility to insider traders for trading plans**.
 - ⊖ Insider refers to any person (usually senior management and officials) in a company who has **access to unpublished price-sensitive information (UPSI)**.
 - ⊖ Under PIT, insiders have a **narrow window to carry out trades to avoid insider trading**.
 - ⊖ Insiders have to give a **'trading plan' specifying the share price, amount, and transaction date in advance**.
 - ◆ It enables insiders to **trade in securities in a compliant manner**.



Central Electronics Limited (CEL)

CEL is granted "Mini RATNA" status (Category-1).

- **Eligibility for Mini Ratna (category 1):** made profit in the last three years continuously, pre-tax profit is Rs.30 crores or more in at least one of the three years and have a positive net worth.

About CEL

- It is under the **Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR)**, Ministry of Science & Technology.
- Established in 1974, with an objective to **commercially exploit indigenous technologies**.
- It is a pioneer in the country in the field of **Solar Photovoltaic (SPV)**.



Microwave Obscurant Chaff Rocket (MOCR)

DRDO handed over the **Medium Range-Microwave Obscurant Chaff Rocket (MR-MOCR)** to the Indian Navy.

MR-MOCR

- **Developed by:** DRDO's Defence Laboratory in Jodhpur.
- **Purpose:** Obscure radar signals reduce detection.
- **Specification:**
 - ⊖ Chaff is a passive **electronic countermeasure** consisting of electrically conducting fine fiber of resonant length to act as a **microwave dipole**.
- **Working mechanism:**
 - ⊖ The rocket, when fired, **forms a microwave obscurant cloud in space**, thus creating an effective shield against hostile threats having Radio Frequency seekers.



Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)

ANRF supported research on to production of hydrogen gas from a mixture of methanol and paraformaldehyde.

About ANRF

- **Genesis:** Established as a **statutory body by the ANRF Act 2023**.
 - ⊖ The erstwhile **Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)** has been **subsumed into ANRF**.
- **Apex Ministry:** Ministry of Science and Technology
- **Responsibilities:** An apex body to provide **high-level strategic direction of scientific research** in the country as per recommendations of the National Education Policy.



Lake Natron

Climate impact is impacting Tanzania's Lake Natron.

About Lake Natron

- It is the only significant and regular breeding site for the East-African population of **Lesser Flamingo**.
 - ⊖ Over 75 per cent of the world population of this species **migrates each year to Lake Natron to breed**.
- It has a **unique composition of warm waters and salt, caustic soda, and magnesite deposits resulting in pH as high as 10.5**
- It was added to the **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands List** in 2001.
- **Concern:** agriculture, pollution, and climate change.

Places in News



Denmark (Capital: Copenhagen)

Denmark, a major pork and dairy exporter, will introduce a **tax on livestock carbon dioxide emissions from 2030**, making it the **first country to do so**.

Political Features

- **Location:** It is a Nordic country of northern Europe and is part of **Jutland Peninsula**.
- **Territorial boundary:** Germany (in South)
- **Surrounding water bodies:** North Sea (west coast), **Kattegat Bay** (East Coast)

Geographical Feature

- **Islands:** Denmark is an **archipelago of around 400 islands** with the **biggest island being Zealand**
- **Longest River:** Gudenå.
- **Climate:** Warm Gulf Stream (North Atlantic Current) **moderates the climate and rain falls throughout the year**



AHMEDABAD



BENGALURU



BHOPAL



CHANDIGARH



DELHI



GUWAHATI



HYDERABAD



JAIPUR



JODHPUR



LUCKNOW



PRAYAGRAJ



PUNE



RANCHI