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## **Jyoti Ratre Becomes India's Oldest Woman to Conquer Mount Everest**

### **Why in News?**

- Jyoti Ratre, an entrepreneur and fitness enthusiast from Madhya Pradesh, has etched her name in history by becoming the oldest Indian woman to conquer Mount Everest. Ratre's triumphant ascent to the summit of the world's highest peak comes precisely six years after Sangeeta Bahl, at the age of 53, earned the title of 'India's oldest woman to climb Mount Everest' on May 19, 2018.

### **Unwavering Determination**

- For Ratre, this extraordinary feat was the culmination of unwavering determination and resilience. Her journey to the top of Mount Everest was not without its challenges, as she had previously

attempted the summit in 2023 but was forced to turn back from an altitude of 8,160 meters due to harsh weather conditions. Undeterred by this setback, Ratre's resolve remained steadfast, and she embarked on her second attempt with renewed vigor.

### **Conquering the Everest**

- Ratre's remarkable achievement was realized as part of a 15-member expedition team organized by 8K Expeditions, led by the renowned Bolivian climber David Hugo Ayaviri Quispe. Her successful summit not only reaffirms the indomitable spirit of Indian mountaineers but also serves as an inspiration for individuals of all ages to pursue their dreams and push beyond perceived limitations.

### **A Trailblazer for Women's Empowerment**

- Ratre's conquest of Mount Everest holds profound significance beyond the realm of mountaineering. Her achievement serves as



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a powerful testament to the strength and resilience of women, shattering societal stereotypes and inspiring countless others to break through barriers and pursue their passions fearlessly. By becoming the oldest Indian woman to stand atop the world's highest peak, Ratre has not only etched her name in the annals of mountaineering history but has also emerged as a trailblazer for women's empowerment and a beacon of hope for those who dare to dream.

## Overcoming Adversity

- Ratre's journey to the summit of Mount Everest was not without its share of adversity and challenges. From braving harsh weather conditions to navigating treacherous terrain, her unwavering determination and mental fortitude played a crucial role in her ultimate success. Her ability to overcome obstacles and persevere in the face of daunting challenges serves as a powerful reminder of the human potential to achieve greatness when fueled by passion and an unyielding spirit.

## Inspiring a Nation

- As news of Ratre's remarkable achievement spreads across the nation, her story has resonated with countless individuals, transcending age and gender boundaries. Her triumph has ignited a sense of pride and inspiration, reminding the country of the incredible feats that can be accomplished through sheer grit, determination, and an unshakable belief in oneself.
- Jyoti Ratre's ascent to the summit of Mount Everest is a testament to the power of the human spirit and a celebration of the boundless potential that lies within each one of us. Her remarkable journey serves as a beacon of inspiration, encouraging individuals from all walks of life to pursue their dreams, embrace challenges, and never allow age or societal norms to define the limits of their aspirations.

## India's Trade Deficit with Top Partners in 2023-24

- India faced a trade deficit with nine out of its top ten trading partners in the fiscal year 2023-24, according to official data. Notably, China emerged as India's largest trading partner, surpassing the United States, with bilateral commerce totaling \$118.4 billion.

### Trade Deficit Details

- India experienced widening trade deficits with China, Russia, Korea, and Hong Kong compared to the previous fiscal year.
- The trade deficit with China rose to \$85 billion, with Russia to \$57.2 billion, with Korea to \$14.71 billion, and with Hong Kong to \$12.2 billion in 2023-24.

### Trade Surplus and Free Trade Agreements

- India maintained a trade surplus of \$36.74 billion with the United States, which is one of the few countries where India holds such a surplus.
- Notably, India has free trade agreements with four of its top trading partners: Singapore, the UAE, Korea, and Indonesia (as part of the Asian bloc).

### Overall Trade Deficit Trends

- While a trade deficit isn't inherently negative, a rising overall deficit poses challenges to the economy.
- The deficit can lead to currency depreciation, making imports more expensive and exacerbating the trade imbalance.





- Addressing the deficit necessitates strategies such as boosting exports, curbing unnecessary imports, fostering domestic industries, and effectively managing currency and debt levels.

## Expert Insights

- Ajay Srivastava, Founder of the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), emphasizes the importance of mitigating trade deficits to prevent economic instability. He highlights the risks associated with increased reliance on foreign supplies and the potential consequences of elevated deficits on currency depreciation, external debt, and investor confidence.

## Lithuania's President Gitanas Naus'da Secures Landslide Reelection Victory

- In a resounding victory, Lithuanian President Gitanas Naus'da has clinched a second term, triumphing over Prime Minister Ingrida Šimonyt. With preliminary results indicating Naus'da's commanding lead with 74.5% of the votes, his reelection underscores broad support for his

moderate conservative stance and unwavering advocacy for Ukraine.

## Naus'da's Reelection: A Landslide Victory

- Preliminary figures from Lithuania's Central Electoral Commission reveal Naus'da's sweeping win, securing 74.5% of the votes cast, while Prime Minister Šimonyt trailed with 24.1%.

## Continued Support for Ukraine and Defiance Against Authoritarianism

- Throughout his tenure, President Naus'da has remained a stalwart advocate for Ukraine, a stance echoed across Lithuania's political spectrum. Amid regional tensions and authoritarian crackdowns in neighboring Belarus and Russia, Naus'da's administration has provided refuge to those fleeing oppression, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding Lithuania's independence and freedom.

## Strategic Importance Amid Regional Dynamics

- Situated on NATO's eastern flank, Lithuania's presidency holds significant weight amid escalating tensions between Russia and the West, particularly amidst the



ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Naus'ada's leadership in overseeing foreign and defense policy, alongside his role as supreme commander of the armed forces, underscores Lithuania's strategic significance in the Baltic region.

## Path to Reelection and Future Outlook

- Having entered politics through his successful presidential bid in 2019, Naus'ada's victory marks a continuation of his tenure, reaffirming public confidence in his leadership. As he prepares to embark on his second term, Naus'ada's focus on upholding Lithuania's sovereignty and fostering alliances with key partners remains paramount.

## South African Regulator Fines SBI's South Africa Branch

- The Prudential Authority of the South African Reserve Bank has imposed a financial penalty of 10 million rand (₹ 4.5 crore) on the State Bank of India's South Africa branch for non-compliance with certain provisions of the country's Financial Intelligence Centre Act 38 of 2001 (FIC Act). The penalty comprises an immediately payable portion of 5.50 million rand, already paid, and a suspended amount of 4.50 million rand, contingent on compliance within 36 months.

## Bank of Baroda Cooperating in Compliance Investigations

- Investigations by South African Reserve Bank
- Bank of Baroda is currently under investigation by the South African Reserve Bank for alleged compliance lapses at its branch in South Africa. The bank is actively cooperating with the investigations.

## Disclosure and Compliance Measures

- Bank of Baroda has made all necessary disclosures under Regulation 30 of the Sebi (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. It has also improved its compliance processes and implemented remediation measures to enhance KYC/AML procedures to meet regulatory expectations.

## Ongoing Legal Proceedings

- Some matters related to the investigations are sub-judice, including Bank of Baroda's appeal against a fine equivalent to Rs 50 million. The bank assures that it will keep the stock exchanges informed of any significant developments arising from these investigations.

## Market Reaction

- Bank of Baroda's stock closed 1.97 per cent down at Rs 154.40 on the BSE on Tuesday following the news.

