

22-04-2024

World Earth Day 2024

Why in the News?

- World Earth Day, annually celebrated on April 22, serves as a reminder that everyone has a shared responsibility for the health of the planet and that corporations, governments, communities, and individuals must work together to achieve this goal.

More About the News

- World Earth Day, also known as International Mother Earth Day, is a globally recognized event dedicated to raising awareness and promoting the sustainability of our planet.
- Celebrated annually on April 22, this



significant day engages around one billion people worldwide in activities aimed at addressing the climate crisis and fostering behavioural change to protect the environment.

- The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 13, Climate Action, and SDG 15, Life on Land, highlight the urgent need for climate action and the preservation of terrestrial ecosystems.
- According to World Wildlife Fund research,

global plastic trash production exceeds 380 million tonnes annually, with a substantial amount of it finding its way into landfills, oceans, and waterways.

- The themes for each Earth Day vary, focusing on different aspects of environmental protection and sustainability.
- With the ultimate goal of building a plastic-free future for generations to come, this year's Earth Day, which will be observed on April 22, 2024, EARTHDAY.ORG has announced the theme: 'Planet vs. Plastics'.
- It highlights the threat plastics pose to the planet and human health, thereby calling an end to all plastic waste by demanding a 60% reduction in the production of plastics by the year 2040.
- The concept of Earth Day can be traced back to the late 1960s, which saw a surge in public debate over environmental issues, with Rachel Carson's influential book *Silent Spring* (1962) and the Santa Barbara oil spill (1969) raising awareness about environmental destruction.
- In essence, World Earth Day is more significant than ever in an era of growing concerns about the environment, depleting natural resources, and severe climate change.
- In addition to highlighting the growing concerns, it provides a crucial forum for raising public awareness of these issues and encouraging and inspiring individuals globally to take action.
- It serves as a reminder that everyone has a shared responsibility for the health of the planet and that corporations, governments, communities, and individuals must work together to achieve this goal.

FIDE Candidates 2024 Chess Tournament

Why in the News?

- D. Gukesh has won the FIDE Candidates tournament 2024, and became the youngest challenger in history of World Chess Championship.

More About the News

- D Gukesh, the 17-year-old from Chennai, thus became the only second Indian, after Viswanathan Anand, to qualify for the



World title match.

- The 17-year-old from Chennai won the qualifying event, the Candidates tournament, in Toronto after drawing his final round encounter with second seed Hikaru Nakamura of the United States.
- Gukesh became the only second Indian, after Viswanathan Anand, to qualify for the World title match. He will take on the reigning champion Ding Liren of China.
- The women's tournament was won by China's Tan Zhongyi, who finished with nine points, 1.5 ahead of the competition. The Indian duo of Koneru Humpy and R. Vaishali tied for second place with 7.5 points each, along with Lei Tingjie of China.
- The teen sensation, D Gukesh was born on May 29 2006 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. He is from a Telugu-speaking family, who hail from the Godavari delta region of Andhra Pradesh.

- In August 2023, he became the youngest player to reach a rating of 2750. He reached the quarter-finals of the Chess World Cup 2023, before losing to Magnus Carlsen in the quarter-finals.
- He overtook Viswanathan Anand in September 2023, as the top-ranked Indian Grandmaster, making it the first time in 37 years that Anand was not the top-ranked Indian player.

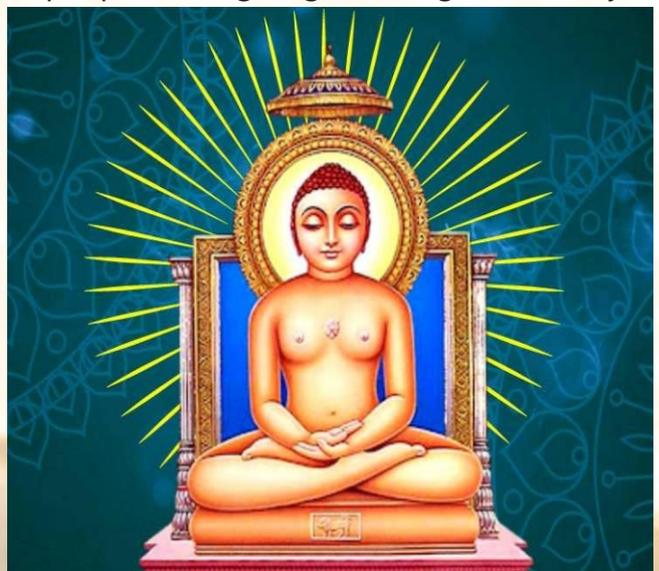
Bhagwan Mahavir Nirvan Mahotsav

Why in the News?

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the 2550th Bhagwan Mahaveer Nirvan Mahotsav on the auspicious occasion of Mahavir Jayanti at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on 21st April 2024.

More About the News

- Mahavir Jayanti marks the birth anniversary of the founder of Jainism or Mahavir Janma Kalyanak.
- The Jain community celebrates the festival to observe peace and harmony, and spread the teachings of Mahavir, the 24th Tirthankara of Jainism.
- The festival falls on the 13th day of the Chaitra month in the Jain calendar - this year it is being observed on April 21.
- Mahavir Jayanti is celebrated by taking a procession with Mahavir's idol on a chariot and people reciting religious songs on the way.



- Jains also celebrate this day by doing charity, praying, observing fasts, visiting Jain temples, conducting mass prayers, and meditating.
- The Government commemorated the occasion with the Jain community by organizing a cultural programme in Bharat Mandapam along with Saints from the Jain community gracing the occasion and blessing the congregation.

EPFO adds 15.48 lakh net members during February 2024

Why in the News?

EPFO's provisional payroll data released on 20th April, 2024 highlights that EPFO has added 15.48 lakh net members in the month of February, 2024.

More About the News

- The data indicates that around 7.78 lakh new members have been enrolled during February, 2024.
- A noticeable aspect of the data is the dominance of the 18-25 age group, constituting a significant 56.36% of the total new members added in February 2024 indicating the majority of individuals joining the organized workforce are youth, primarily first-time job seekers.
- The payroll data highlights that approximately 11.78 lakh members exited and subsequently rejoined EPFO.
- Gender-wise analysis of payroll data unveils that out of 7.78 lakh new members, around 2.05 lakh are new female members.
- Also, the net female member addition

during the month stood at around 3.08 lakh. The female member addition is indicative of a broader shift towards a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

- In monthly payroll data, the count of members joining EPFO for the first time through Aadhaar validated Universal Account Number (UAN), existing members exiting from coverage of EPFO and those who exited but re-joining as members, is taken to arrive at net monthly payroll.

'Longevity India' Initiative

Why in the News?

- The Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has launched the 'Longevity India' Initiative, a project focused on efforts to extend human healthspan and tackle ageing-related challenges.

More About the News

- This initiative seeks to enhance the understanding of through both fundamental and applied research, and to develop solutions that can improve quality of life.
- The initiative has received initial grant funding support from Prashanth Prakash, Founding Partner, Accel India.
- The Longevity India Initiative brings together a multidisciplinary team of experts from academia, industry, and healthcare to address complex challenges related to ageing.
- The initiative has also started a large-scale clinical study that will involve researchers from multiple IISc departments, clinicians, industry, philanthropists and civil society.
- This initiative seeks to enhance the understanding of ageing through both fundamental and applied research, and to develop solutions that can improve quality of life.
- The Longevity India Initiative brings together a multidisciplinary team of experts from academia, industry, and healthcare to address complex challenges related to



ageing.

- The initiative will leverage advanced research to develop interventions that can help manage age-related diseases more effectively, with an emphasis on promoting healthy ageing across India.
- "The Longevity India Initiative challenges the notion that ageing is an inevitable fate.
- The initiative's research focus includes identifying early disease indicators,

investigating ageing biomarkers, and developing new therapeutics and technologies to aid in healthy ageing.

- IISc's extensive experience in biological and interdisciplinary sciences will facilitate the development, testing and implementation of these innovations.

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