



**28-02-2024**

## **First Pey Jal (Drinking Water) Survekshan Awards**

### **Why in News?**

- The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs announces the first Pey Jal Survekshan Awards scheduled for the 5th of March 2024 at Vigyan Bhawan. Her Excellency, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, the President of India, will preside over the event, where cities and states will be honored for their excellence in the water sector.

### **More about the News**

- Pey Jal Survekshan ensured clean water through independent NABL lab testing at source and citizen-end. Using a GIS-enabled web portal, geo-tagging, and infrastructure mapping, the survey

collected accurate and transparent data.

- With 5 lakh household responses and assessments in over a thousand facilities, it prioritized a comprehensive evaluation, including testing over 24,000 water samples.
- Pey Jal Survekshan results are expected to drive ULB decision-making, enhance service delivery, and foster citizen engagement, instilling a sense of ownership and knowledge dissemination about water conservation and optimal use.
- The grand event, set to host a gathering of over 1,500 awardees and participants, will not only celebrate excellence but also mark the launch of the AMRUT Mitra initiative, with women SHGs connected live from various locations country wide.



- Born out of the insightful "Women for Water, Water for Women" Campaign conducted under AMRUT 2.0 from 7th to 9th November 2023, AMRUT Mitra aims to actively involve women Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the urban water sector, designating women as key contributors and emphasizing their role in household water management.
- The overarching goal of AMRUT Mitra is to instill a sense of ownership among women, promoting inclusivity and diversity in traditionally male-dominated sectors while ensuring access to safe drinking water for households and addressing gender inequality.
- The anticipated outcomes include upliftment of the socio-economic status of women SHGs, aligning closely with the objectives of AMRUT 2.0, increased awareness, positive community impact, and a model for future initiatives.

### Sweden Set to Join NATO

#### Why in News?

- Sweden cleared the final hurdle to become the military alliance's 32nd member after Hungary - the last holdout among the countries - held a parliamentary vote to approve the move.

#### More About the News

- Sweden's submitted its application to join NATO along with Finland in May 2022, three months after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.
- Finland's application was ratified relatively quickly, and it joined the alliance in April 2023. However, Sweden's bid was held up by Turkey and Hungary. Ankara claimed that Sweden was harboring Kurdish groups, which it considers terrorists. Turkey eventually approved the NATO bid in January after Sweden introduced new anti-terror laws.

#### About NATO

- The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was

created in 1949 by the United States, Canada, and several Western European nations to provide collective security against the Soviet Union.

- NATO was the first peacetime military alliance the United States entered into outside of the Western Hemisphere. After the destruction of the Second World War, the nations of Europe struggled to rebuild their economies and ensure their security.
- NATO's fundamental goal is to safeguard the Allies' freedom and security by political and military means. NATO remains the principal security instrument of the transatlantic community and expression of its common democratic values.
- From its founding, NATO's primary purpose was to unify and strengthen the Western Allies' military response to a possible invasion of western Europe by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies.

### The demise of legendary singer Pankaj Udhas

#### Why in News?

- The soulful voice that soothed broken hearts, Pankaj Udhas passed away after a prolonged illness in Mumbai on 26th February 2024 at the age of 72 years.

#### More About Pankaj Udhas

- Pankaj Udhas was born on May 17, 1951, in Jetpur, Gujarat. In addition to ghazals, he was well-known for his film work.



- In 1980, he gained widespread popularity for his solo ghazal album Aahat. Later, he recorded other successes, including Mukarrar (1981), Tarrannum (1982), Mehfil (1983), and many more.
- Some of his popular renditions are Chitthi Aayi Hai, Chandani Raat Mein, Na Kajre Ki Dhaar, Aur Ahista Kijiye Baatein, Ek Taraf Uska Ghar and Thodi Thodi Piya Karo. He also made a mark as a playback singer in many Hindi films, including Naam, Saajan and Mohra.
- Pankaj Udhas was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and was getting treatment for it for the past two to three months. One of the most common cancer in men is pancreas cancer.

#### About Pancreatic Cancer

- Pancreatic cancer is a disease in which malignant (cancer) cells form in the tissues of the pancreas.
- Smoking and health history can affect the risk of pancreatic cancer.
- Signs and symptoms of pancreatic cancer include jaundice, pain, and weight loss.
- Pancreatic cancer is difficult to diagnose early.

#### Garbhini-GA2: AI Model to Determine Gestational Age

##### Why in News?

- Researchers from BRIC-THSTI Faridabad, IIT Madras, and other institutes have created a new method to figure out the age of a developing baby (foetus) in pregnant Indian



women during the second and third trimesters (months 4-9 of pregnancy).

#### More About Garbhini-GA2

- Garbhini-GA2 is a new computer model that can estimate how far along an Indian woman's pregnancy is. It was created using data from a study of pregnant women in North India called GARBH-Ini.
- It is part of an interdisciplinary group for advanced research on birth outcomes — the DBT India initiative (GARBH-Ini) programme. The Garbhini-GA2 is the first late-trimester GA estimation model to be developed and validated using Indian population data. Currently, models used for the Western population are in use which could prove erroneous when applied in the later part of pregnancy due to variations in the growth of the foetus in the Indian population.
- The Garbhini-GA2 accurately estimates the foetus' age, reducing error by almost three times.
- The Indian data would help to provide appropriate care for pregnant women and determine the precise date of birth, thus reducing maternal and infant mortality rates.

#### Coal Based Power Generation in the Country Grows by 10%

##### Why in News?

- From April to January 2024, India experienced a notable 6.60 % growth in power generation compared to the corresponding period in the previous year. Particularly striking was the commendable 10.06% growth in coal-based power generation during this period.

#### More About the News

- In India, power generation is diversified across conventional (Thermal, Nuclear, and Hydro) and renewable sources (Wind, Solar, Biomass, etc.). However, coal remains the predominant source, contributing over 70% to the total power generation.



- Coal-based power generation in India has been pivotal in meeting the nation's burgeoning energy demands. Currently, India is witnessing a substantial surge in power requirements, propelled by industrial expansion, technological advancements and economic development etc.
- Despite the surging power demand, coal import for blending witnessed a significant decrease of 36.69% to 19.36 MT during Apr'23-Jan'24 from 30.58 MT in the corresponding period of the previous year. This exemplifies the nation's steadfast commitment to achieving self-reliance in coal production and minimizing overall coal imports.
- The government persists in its relentless efforts to further augment coal production with the aim of enhancing availability and reducing dependence on imported coal. This strategic approach serves to safeguard foreign reserves while bolstering the nation's energy security.

### 'Startup Mahakumbh' to be held at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi

#### Why in News?

- Startup Mahakumbh, a pioneering startup event is being organised by ASSOCHAM, NASSCOM, Bootstrap Incubation & Advisory Foundation, TiE and Indian Venture and Alternate Capital Association (IVCA), and supported by Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

#### More About 'Startup Mahakumbh'

- The event is expected to be a first-of-its-kind event in terms of magnitude, scale, and impact, and is scheduled to be organised from March 18-20, 2024, at the iconic Bharat Mandapam and Pragati Maidan in New Delhi.
- The Startup Mahakumbh is aimed to be one of the largest get-together of startups, unicorns, soonicorns, investors, industry and ecosystem stakeholders; all under one roof to showcase the India story in

entrepreneurship, technology, and innovation.

- The mega startup event will also serve as a platform for exchange of ideas that contribute to building a robust and resilient startup ecosystem in India. This objective will be fulfilled through several activities including mentoring sessions, master classes, keynote addresses and Unicorn roundtables amongst others.
- Ahead of the event, the Organizing Committee for Startup Mahakumbh is set to host the curtain raiser for the event on 27th February 2024 at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi, in the presence of Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Minister of Commerce & Industry.
- With the purpose to enable handshakes and bridge startups with a spectrum of inventors - VCs, angels, family offices, and HNIs- as well as potential corporate partners, the event is expected to host 1000+ startups spread across 10+ thematic tracks, and a large number of investors, incubators & accelerators, from Indian and global startup ecosystem over the span of three days.

### India's 1st septic tank cleaning robot: Homosep Atom

#### Why in News?

- India's first septic tank/manhole cleaning robot, offering an end-to-end solution to eliminate manual scavenging, is strengthening the swachhata abhiyan in different corners of the country.



- The technology called Homosep Atom developed by the startup incubated in the Department of Science and Technology (DST)-Technology Business Incubator (TBI) of IIT Madras, solves manual cleaning methods and transforms it to robotic cleaning methods.

#### More About the News

- DST-Technology Business Incubators (TBIs) are established in Academic /Technical /R&D Institutions as part of NIDHI programme to support and nurture knowledge driven innovative start-ups into successful enterprises.
- The startup called Solinas, which developed this affordable robotic solution integrated Artificial Intelligence (AI) to inspect, clean, and manage confined space for sanitation purposes. It helped clean up manhole blockages and reduced sewer overflows in Madurai.
- The application of Homosep Atom was also extended to the intricate lanes of Chennai's densely populated areas. Targeting septic tanks associated with large apartments, housing boards, and individual houses, this process enabled Municipalities to promptly

and efficiently clean, clear, and transport waste to treatment plants.

- Besides, sanitary workers were empowered with manhole cleaning robots that helped them clean the manholes from outside and avoid going inside the toxic environment, thus providing dignity to the sanitary workers.
- Technologies like Endobot and Swasth AI served as pipeline diagnostic tools capable of detecting and mitigating water contamination, wastages, and sewer overflows, often unnoticed due to underground issues like leaks, blockages, and tree roots in cities like Coimbatore.



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