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1. McGill Awards Honorary Doctorate to Dr. Soumya Swaminathan (May 13, 2024)

Dr. Soumya Swaminathan, former WHO Chief Scientist, is set to receive an honorary doctorate from McGill University during the Spring 2024 Convocation ceremonies.

An Overview of the News

- McGill University, renowned for its academic excellence, bestows honorary degrees upon individuals with exceptional contributions to scholarly, scientific, or artistic fields, or significant societal impact through professional or philanthropic endeavors.
- McGill University will confer upon Dr. Swaminathan the Doctor of Science, honoris causa (D Sc) in Health Sciences on May 28.

Soumya Swaminathan's distinguished career:

- Dr. Swaminathan, aged 65, has a distinguished career spanning over 40 years in public health and infectious diseases.
- Notably, she served as WHO's Deputy Director-General (Programmes) until the end of 2022 and thereafter as its first Chief Scientist during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Swaminathan's leadership during the pandemic:

- Dr. Swaminathan played a key role in coordinating global responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Her leadership facilitated research coordination, dissemination of critical information, and guidance to policymakers on effective strategies to combat the virus.

McGill University's highest honor:

- The honorary doctorate represents McGill's highest honor, symbolizing the transformative impact of individual achievement.
- McGill President Deep Saini emphasizes that the award reflects shared values and aspirations within the university community.

2. Doha's Hamad International Airport Crowned World's Best in 2024 Skytrax Awards (April 22, 2024)

Hamad International Airport (HIA) in Doha, Qatar, clinched the title of World's Best Airport in the 2024 Skytrax World Airport Awards.

An Overview of the News

- **Singapore Changi Airport**, previous winner of the 2023 Airport of the Year award, **secured 2nd place** overall and was recognized as the Best Airport in Asia. It also won the **accolade for the World's Best Airport Immigration Service**.

- **Incheon Airport in Seoul, South Korea, ranked 3rd globally** and was honored with the title of **World's Most Family Friendly Airport for 2024**.
- The awards ceremony took place at the **Passenger Terminal EXPO** in **Frankfurt, Germany**, on **April 17th, 2024**.
- Skytrax, an international aviation research organization **headquartered** in **London, United Kingdom (UK)**, organizes the prestigious World Airport Awards.

Indian Airports in the 2024 Global Rankings:

- Delhi Airport retained **36th place**.
- Mumbai Airport maintained a position within the top 100, **dropping to 95th from 84th**.
- Bengaluru Airport climbed to **59th place**.
- Hyderabad Airport rose to **61st place**.
- Goa's Manohar International Airport secured the **92nd spot**.

2024 Global Airport Rankings:

1. Hamad International Airport, Doha, Qatar
2. Singapore Changi Airport, Singapore
3. Incheon International Airport, Seoul, South Korea
4. Tokyo Haneda International Airport, Japan
5. Tokyo Narita International Airport, Japan
6. Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport, France
7. Dubai International Airport, United Arab Emirates (UAE)
8. Munich Airport, Germany
9. Zurich Airport, Switzerland
10. Istanbul Airport, Türkiye

3. Deepika Soreng Receives Asunta Lakra Award for Outstanding Hockey Achievement (April 20, 2024)

Deepika Soreng received the prestigious Hockey India Asunta Lakra Award for Upcoming Player during the Hockey India 6th Annual Awards 2023.

An Overview of the News

- India women's hockey team forward Deepika Soreng expressed her gratitude to Hockey India on April 16, 2024.

- In 2023, Deepika made her debut for the team in the Women's Junior Asia Cup.
- She contributed significantly to the team's success, scoring 7 goals in 6 matches to help them clinch the gold medal, and emerged as the team's second-highest goalscorer.

International Engagements:

- Deepika participated in various international tournaments including the 2023 4 Nations Junior Women's Invitation Tournament (Dusseldorf) and the 2023 FIH Junior Women's World Cup.
- Her presence and performances played a vital role in the team's achievements on the global stage.

Remarkable Achievement:

- Deepika played a key role in the Indian team's silver medal win at the inaugural FIH Women's Hockey 5s World Cup Oman 2024.
- She scored 9 goals in the tournament and was awarded the Young Player of the Tournament title.

Selection in the national team core group:

- Recently, Deepika was named in the 33-member national women's team core group to train at the SAI Center in Bengaluru till May 16.
- She was selected from a 60-member evaluation team after rigorous selection tests held on April 6 – April 7.

4. Rajiv Gandhi International Airport wins 'Best Airport Staff in India and South Asia 2024' award (April 19, 2024)

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) was awarded the 'Best Airport Staff in India and South Asia 2024' award by Skytrax.

An Overview of the News

- The announcement was made during a ceremony at the **Passenger Terminal Expo 2024 in Frankfurt, Germany.**
- RGIA topped all airports in the **Indian and South Asian regions.**
- The award is based on a comprehensive audit and evaluation that assesses various factors including service quality (attitude, friendliness, efficiency) of employees in front-line positions.
- The assessment includes customer-facing staff at help and information counters, immigration and security personnel as well as staff in stores and food and beverage outlets.

- **Pradeep Panikkar, CEO, GMR Hyderabad International Airport Limited**, said Hyderabad Airport continuously raises customer service standards and is a pioneer in redefining the airport experience.
- The airport's commitment to excellence is demonstrated through **innovative technologies, strong stakeholder engagement and dedication** to creating memorable experiences for passengers, encapsulated in their promise to deliver '**Epic Everyday**' moments.

About RGIA

- Rajiv Gandhi International Airport serves as the international airport for **Hyderabad**, the capital of Telangana, India.
- Located in Shamshabad, about 24 kilometers south of Hyderabad, it began operations on **23 March 2008**.
- This airport was established in place of **Begumpet Airport**, which earlier served as the sole **civil airport for Hyderabad**.

5. Naval Investiture: Honors for Bravery and Excellence at INS Hansa Ceremony (April 16, 2024)

Admiral Radhakrishnan Hari Kumar, Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS), presided over the ceremony at INS Hansa, Goa.

An Overview of the News

- Awards presented on behalf of President Droupadi Murmu of India.

Awards and Recognitions

- 35 naval personnel honored for acts of bravery, leadership, professional excellence, and distinguished service.
- **Notable recipients:**
 - Commander Manish Singh Karki
 - Commander Kaustab Banerjee
 - Lieutenant Commander Panneerselvam Vishnu Prasanna
 - Lieutenant Commander Bhaskar, awarded Nao Sena Medals for Gallantry.

Special Recognitions

- CNS Trophy for Best Green Practices 2023: Naval Dockyard, Mumbai, Maharashtra, and INS Valsura.
- Unit Citations awarded to various Naval units, including INS Teg, INS Kolkata, INS Karmuk, INS Sumedha, INS Sumitra, INS Sharda, submarine INS Sindhukesari, flight squadron INAS

550, and shore establishments Chilka, Circars, Eksila, Dronacharya, and Naval Ship Repair Yard (Karwar).

Individual Achievements

- Lt VK Jain Memorial Gold Medal 2024 presented to Shubham Hira for pioneering research in weapon improvement and electrical engineering.
- Capt Ravi Dhir Memorial Gold Medal 2024 awarded to Tabsheer Ahmed Wani for contributions to flight safety.

6. Israeli Mathematician Avi Wigderson Wins 2023 ACM Turing Award (April 14, 2024)

Avi Wigderson, an Israeli mathematician and computer scientist, was awarded the 2023 ACM A.M. Turing Award.

An Overview of the News

- This award is widely regarded as the "Nobel Prize of Computing".
- He holds the position of Herbert H. Maass Professor in the School of Mathematics at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in Princeton, New Jersey, USA.

Reason for Award:

- Wigderson was honored for his foundational contributions to the theory of computation.
- His work significantly influenced the understanding of randomness in computation and mathematics.
- He was recognized for his intellectual leadership in theoretical computer science.
- The ACM A.M. Turing Award carries a prestigious cash prize of USD 1 million.

Contributions and Career Highlights:

- In 1986, Wigderson began his academic career as a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Computer Science at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel.
- He was promoted to Associate Professor in 1987 and later became a full Professor at the Computer Science Institute of the Hebrew University.
- In 1993, he assumed the role of Chairman of the Computer Science Institute at Hebrew University.
- In 1999, he joined the faculty as a Professor at the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) in Princeton, New Jersey.

7. Gagandeep Kang becomes first Indian woman to win 2024 Canada Gairdner Global Health Award (April 13, 2024)

On April 11, 2024, Gagandeep Kang, an Indian microbiologist and virologist, received the prestigious John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award from the Toronto-based Gairdner Foundation.

An Overview of the News

- Kang is the first Indian woman to be bestowed with this honor.
- Kang's recognition stemmed from her extensive cohort-based epidemiological, environmental, and clinical trial research on enteric diseases in children.
- Her work has had a significant impact on vaccine development and health policy in India and globally.

Background of Gagandeep Kang

- Kang serves as an adjunct professor at the Christian Medical College (CMC) in Vellore, Tamil Nadu.
- Additionally, she holds the position of Director of enteric diagnostics, genomics, and epidemiology at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- Kang's contributions include playing a pivotal role in the development and introduction of two Indian rotavirus vaccines, Rotavac and Rotasiil, into the National Immunisation Program.

John Dirks Canada Gairdner Global Health Award

- This award is presented annually to researchers who have utilized rational, scientifically based research to improve the health and well-being of populations facing health inequities globally.

About the Canada Gairdner Awards

- Established in 1957 with a donation from philanthropist James A. Gairdner, the Gairdner Foundation is a non-profit organization that acknowledges outstanding achievements in biomedical research worldwide.
- The Canada Gairdner Awards have been presented annually since 1957 by the Gairdner Foundation.
- Recipients of these awards receive CDN 100,000 each along with a medal.

8. National Maritime Day 2024: Sagar Samman Awards and Recognition (April 11, 2024)

Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MOPSW) celebrated the 61st National Maritime Day (5 April 2024) with awards and recognition in the maritime sector.

An Overview of the News

- The event was held at the Yashwantrao Chavan Centre, Nariman Point, Mumbai, Maharashtra, organized by the National Maritime Day Celebrations (NMDC) Central Committee.
- Theme of the event: "Sustainable Shipping: Opportunities and Challenges."

Sagar Samman Award Winners:

- Sagar Samman Varun Award: Dharendra Kumar Sanyal
- Sagar Samman Award for Excellence: Captain Kamal Kant Chaudhary
- Sagar Samman Award for Gallantry: Captain Subir Saha and Captain OM Dutta

NMDC Awards for Excellent Maritime Training Institutions and Recognition:

- During the function NMDC also announced awards for excellent maritime training institutions and recognition.

About National Maritime Day:

- It commemorates the inaugural voyage of the first Indian-owned ship "SS Loyalty" from Mumbai to London in 1919.
- 5th April is celebrated as an annual festival all over India.

9. Chandrayaan-3 Mission Team Wins 2024 John L "Jack" Swigert Jr. Award (April 10, 2024)

The Chandrayaan-3 mission team of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was awarded the 2024 John L "Jack" Swigert Jr. award for Space Exploration.

An Overview of the News

- The award was received by i.DC Manjunath, Consul General of India (CGI) in Houston, United States of America (U.S.A.), on behalf of ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 team.
- The award ceremony took place on 8th April, 2024, during the Opening Ceremony of the annual Space Symposium organized by Space Foundations in Colorado, U.S.A.
- Chandrayaan-3 mission was announced as the recipient of the 2024 John L "Jack" Swigert Jr. award for space exploration by Space Foundation in January 2024.

Other Winners:

- Included teams from NASA, such as OSIRIS-REx, Mars Ingenuity Helicopter, Insight-Mars Cube One, and Dawn and Cassini missions.

About Chandrayaan-3 Mission:

- Launched on 14th July, 2023, from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh (A.P.).
- The lander module successfully touched down on the moon on 23rd August, 2023.
- Consists of a lunar lander named "Vikram" and a lunar rover named "Pragyan."

About John L "Jack" Swigert Jr. Award for Space Exploration:

- Established in 2004 in honor of former NASA astronaut John L. "Jack" Swigert Jr. by Space Foundation.
- Recognizes significant achievements in space exploration.
- Presented annually at the Space Symposium by the Space Foundation, a non-profit organization founded in 1983.

About ISRO:

Established in 1969

President - Sridhar Panikkar Somnath

Headquarters - Bengaluru, Karnataka

10. Mamta G. Sagar received WOW World Literary Award (April 10, 2024)

Mamta G. Sagar was awarded the WOW World Literary Award by the World Organization of Writers (WOW) for her literary contribution.

An Overview of the News

- The ceremony was held during the VII World Literary Festival "WOW-LIFFT-2024" in Abuja, Nigeria from April 4-6, 2024.
- The award consists of a gold medal, a cash prize and a publishing contract.

Mamta G. Sagar's Background:

- Currently a facilitator at Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design, and Technology in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- Previously taught at Hyderabad University and Bangalore University before joining Srishti Manipal in 2016.
- Her poems and research have garnered international recognition and have been translated into various Indian and foreign languages.

Awards and Honors Received:

- Recognized with accolades such as the Sanchi Honnamma Kavya Prashasti (2019), Bhashabharathi Translation Award (2019), and the Charles Wallace India Trust fellowship (2015) at the British Centre for Literary Translation, University of East Anglia, UK.

Notable Works by Mamta G. Sagar:

- Authored four poetry collections, including "Footsteps of the Wild Peacock" (1992) and "Hide & Seek" (2014).
- Notable works also include the musical play for children "Chukki Chukki Chandakki" (1999) and the translation of the Kannada play "Mayye Bhaara Manave Bhaara" as "The Swing of Desire" (2004).

About WOW World Literary Prize:

- Established by the WOW as the successor to the "Golden LiffT" literary prize.
- Aims to encourage authors who make significant contributions to world literature.
- Co-founded by the Eurasian Peoples' Assembly, Pan-African Association of Writers (PAWA), and LIFFT Foundation for the Promotion of Cultural Projects of the Eurasian Peoples.
- Accepts works in Russian, English, Spanish, and Arabic, along with their translations.
- Presented in two categories: Poetry and Prose.