

J A N U A R Y 2 0 2 4



# THE HINDU EDITORIAL MONTHLY COMPILATION



2024

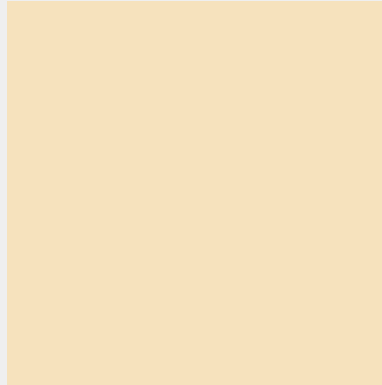


# VOTE FOR CONTINUITY

## STATUS QUO SEEMS TO SUIT TAIWAN BEST IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA.

Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) secured a historic third consecutive term in the presidential elections, emphasizing continuity and a desire for maintaining the delicate status quo with China. Vice President William Lai Ching-te will succeed incumbent Tsai Ing-wen. The victory marks a rejection of the Kuomintang's (KMT) push for closer ties with China and the emergence of the Taiwan People's Party (TPP). Despite DPP's return to power, its influence may be tempered as the KMT holds the majority in the legislature. The election, occurring in the "year of elections," signifies Taiwanese commitment to democracy amid tensions with Beijing. While the previous election focused on cross-strait relations, this one emphasized local issues like the economy. Despite China's military drills and threats of force, Taiwanese voters support the DPP, suggesting resilience against Beijing's pressure.





# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: THURSDAY, 18 JAN 2024

## REGIONAL TURMOIL



West Asia needs a new security equilibrium with the Palestine issue at the centre.

The conflict in Gaza has escalated beyond Israel and Hamas, involving Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. Israel targeted Hezbollah, Hamas, and Iranian commanders in Lebanon and Syria. Hezbollah engaged in conflict with Israeli troops in southern Lebanon, while Iran-backed militias attacked U.S. forces. The Houthis in Yemen turned the Red Sea into a battlefield. The U.S. conducted airstrikes against Shia militias in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. Chaos ensued, leading to Sunni Islamist militants attacking Iran. Recent events include Iran claiming to destroy an Israeli intelligence outpost in Iraq and Sunni Islamist training camps in Syria and Pakistan. The situation reflects regional anarchy, with countries taking unilateral military actions, risking a wider all-out war and challenging international laws. The conflict shifted attention from recent positive developments in the Middle East, such as the Abraham Accords, towards the longstanding issue of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories. The region now faces a deep security crisis, requiring a new security equilibrium, an immediate Gaza ceasefire, and renewed efforts for peace between Israel and Palestinians as a foundation for broader regional security talks.

# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: 20 JANUARY 2024

## GEARING UP FOR CHANGE

**India needs region-specific plans to improve climate resilience.**

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) recently marked its 150th year, initially established during colonial times to understand the southwest monsoon's impact on harvests. Over the years, the IMD has amassed extensive meteorological data, crucial for forecasting monsoons. A study by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water reveals that 55% of India's tehsils are experiencing increased monsoon rainfall, while 11% are witnessing a decrease. Regions like the Indo-Gangetic plains, northeastern India, and the Indian Himalayan region are notably affected. Additionally, changes in the northeast monsoon are evident, with increased rainfall in certain areas. This evolving monsoon pattern poses challenges for agriculture, prompting the need for region-specific plans to enhance climate resilience and allocate resources effectively. Prioritizing local forecasts over national ones is suggested for effective government action.



# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

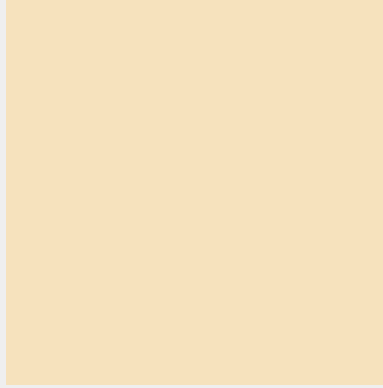
DAY AND DATE: MONDAY, 22 JANUARY 2024

## ASIA ASCENDANT

**After Japan's partially successful moon-landing, the new Space Race has Asian countries in the lead.**

Recently, the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's (JAXA) Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM) spacecraft successfully soft-landed on the moon. Despite facing issues with its solar panels, SLIM transmitted data, making Japan the fifth country to achieve a soft landing on the lunar surface. Distinctive for its precision, SLIM was designed to land within a 100 sq. m area, earning it the nickname "moon sniper." This success precedes a landing attempt by another U.S. company and China's upcoming sample-return mission. JAXA's insights from SLIM will contribute to the Lunar Polar Exploration Mission, a collaboration with India. Precision landings allow missions to commence closer to areas of interest, crucial for navigating the moon's rough terrain. With five countries showcasing lunar landing capabilities, Asia is at the forefront of the new Space Race, while the U.S. and Russia make strides with the NASA Commercial Lunar Payload Services program.





# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: TUESDAY, 23 JANUARY 2024

## FROM FEAR TO HOPE

**The Ram temple must help in healing wounds and creating harmony.**

The inauguration of the Ram temple in Ayodhya signifies a significant shift in India's trajectory, with contrasting reactions from supporters and opponents. Proponents celebrate the central role of the state in the temple's rituals. The Prime Minister envisions the temple as a bridge between India's cultural heritage and future aspirations, urging citizens to focus on progress. He emphasizes humility, universal values, and the temple's connection to national unity. However, opponents fear a dangerous slide, highlighting two divergent visions of Indian nationhood. The temple's construction, facilitated by a judicial decision, acknowledges the Supreme Court's verdict on the Babri Masjid demolition as a serious violation of law. The Prime Minister urges caution against triumphalism and grievance, advocating reconciliation, harmony, and hope over fear. He warns against using historical grievances to settle disputes over places of worship, emphasizing the need for a wise and unifying approach to statecraft. The inauguration marks a milestone for the ruling party's vision but requires a balanced perspective that appreciates the present challenges and opportunities while fostering unity and harmony.



# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: WEDNESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2024

## LIMITS AND BORDERS

**Centre must consult States before decisions that impinge on their powers.**

The ongoing litigation surrounding the territorial jurisdiction of the Border Security Force (BSF) in Punjab indicates a breakdown in effective consultation between the central and state governments. Punjab has filed a suit against the Union government challenging the decision to increase the BSF's operational jurisdiction from 15 km to 50 km, citing a breach of federal principles and encroachment into the law and order powers of the Punjab police. West Bengal shares a similar perspective, with both states passing resolutions in their Assemblies against the expansion. The Supreme Court's decision to examine the matter signifies its importance. The central government, justifying its move, argues that the extended jurisdiction will enhance the BSF's ability to patrol borders effectively.

However, concerns arise regarding the potential encroachment on the state governments' constitutional responsibility for public order and police powers. While the BSF primarily focuses on preventing trans-border crimes, its expanded jurisdiction raises questions about potential clashes with state police. The central force lacks the power to investigate or prosecute offenders, emphasizing the need for collaboration with local law enforcement. The key issues raised by the Supreme Court include determining whether the Centre's notification infringes upon state government authority and identifying factors crucial in defining the "local limits of areas adjoining the borders of India." The expansion should be justified by compelling reasons, highlighting the importance of addressing jurisdictional conflicts between central and state forces.

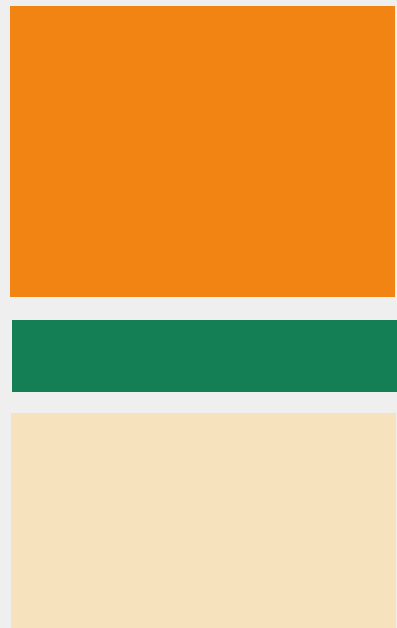
# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: THURSDAY, 25 JANUARY 2024

## CHOPPY WATERS

**India and the Maldives must persist with quiet diplomacy to reset ties.**

The India-Maldives relationship faces new challenges as the Chinese research ship Xiang Yang Hong 03 plans to dock in Male in February. India, concerned about Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean, had previously objected to Chinese research vessels in Sri Lanka, leading to a ban on foreign research ships there from 2024. The current situation is complicated by the strained India-Maldives ties, marked by disputes over derogatory remarks, troop presence, and the cancellation of the hydrography agreement. Despite setbacks, India has maintained engagement with the Maldivian government through high-level meetings. However, there is a need for a diplomatic resolution, given the larger regional dynamics and the potential impact on both nations. It highlights the delicate balance for India between asserting its interests and respecting the sovereignty of the Maldives, while also noting the political implications for the Maldivian government in upcoming elections. The invitation to the Chinese ship, coupled with restricting its activities, is seen as a possible outcome of behind-the-scenes diplomacy to stabilize bilateral relations.





# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: FRIDAY, 26 JANUARY 2024

## EXCHANGE OF OPPORTUNITY

India's research institutes need collaboration across the world at the highest levels.

The Vaibhav fellowship program, launched by the Indian government, aims to attract scientists of Indian origin or ancestry to spend up to three months annually for three years in Indian research laboratories. The initiative seeks to foster collaboration, innovation, and knowledge transfer between Indian diaspora scientists and local institutions. The Vaibhav program parallels the earlier VAJRA Faculty Scheme, differing primarily in its exclusive focus on the Indian diaspora and a three-year duration compared to VAJRA's one-year engagements. While both programs aim to encourage collaboration between Indian and foreign scientists, questions arise about the specific gains from focusing on the Indian diaspora. Short-term fellowships could highlight challenges in Indian scientific research and potentially influence policy changes. However, there is a need for realistic expectations regarding the likelihood of scientists of Indian origin staying in India, given the ethno-nationalist aspect of the fellowship program.





# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DAY: SATURDAY, 27 JANUARY 2024

## ENDLESS WAR

**Russia, and Ukraine and NATO, should make a practical assessment of the war.**

The recent crash of a Russian plane carrying Ukrainian prisoners of war underscores the fragile situation between the two nations, locked in conflict since February 2022. Russia alleges that Kyiv downed the plane in Belgorod, a Russian border town, while Ukraine denies involvement but has not ruled it out. Amid Russia's incremental advances and Ukraine's struggle on the front line, tensions escalate. Ukraine's generals propose mobilizing 500,000 soldiers, a move met with public reluctance. Russia's territorial gains in the east compound Ukraine's challenges, and changing sentiments in Washington add to Kyiv's concerns. Ukrainian President Zelensky pledges to uncover the truth behind the crash but faces broader challenges in defining the war's future. The war cannot be sustained without uninterrupted support from the U.S. and its NATO partners. There is suspicion, deep mistrust and misinformation on both sides, which could lead to more violence and accidents. Russia, Ukraine and NATO should take a more practical assessment of the progress of the war and be ready for talks, instead of continuing an endless war which is hurting all sides.



# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: MONDAY, 29 JAN

## CEREMONY AND SUBSTANCE

**India and France built on past agreements in a show of symbolism.**

French President Emmanuel Macron's recent visit to India was primarily symbolic due to the circumstances surrounding the invitation, as U.S. President Biden had declined. Despite being the sixth French President to attend Republic Day celebrations, Macron's visit focused on ceremony rather than substantial agreements. The two countries had already sealed various deals in 2023, marking 25 years of their strategic partnership, and had ambitious plans outlined in the "Horizon 2047" roadmap. The Republic Day visit saw the signing of agreements, including a "Defence industrial" roadmap for joint military hardware production and a space-defense partnership. Other collaborations covered agriculture, digital health, and science and technology. While some speculated about missed opportunities with other partners, the joint statement highlighted shared positions on global issues like condemning terror attacks. Although certain areas like defense deals and nuclear cooperation were works in progress, the partnership emphasized mutual respect for strategic autonomy and a commitment to tradition and innovation.

# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: TUESDAY, 30 JANUARY 2024

## CHANGING PARTNERS

**Nitish Kumar's unedifying volte-faces are an insult to voters of Bihar.**

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is criticized for his frequent ideological shifts, displaying a pattern of betraying electoral mandates solely to fulfill his thirst for power. In 2017, he overturned the 2015 mandate, and in 2022, he went against the 2020 mandate by switching alliances. Initially aligned with the BJP, he later formed an alliance with the RJD and Congress, only to return to the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance recently. His swift resignation, realignment, and reappointment as Chief Minister raised eyebrows. Despite recent claims as an anti-BJP leader, Kumar's loyalty seems fluid. The BJP, once adamant about not aligning with him, changed its stance without explanation. The BJP's move is seen as neutralizing Kumar's social justice politics, especially among non-Yadav Other Backward Classes. While Kumar's political base is eroding, the BJP emerges as the primary beneficiary, leaving Kumar's legacy tarnished. Nevertheless, he remains Chief Minister, seemingly indifferent to the impact on his reputation. The realignment appears beneficial for the BJP, presenting a present continuous scenario despite the uncertainties of the future.



# THE HINDU EDITORIAL

DAY AND DATE: WEDNESDAY, 31 JANUARY 2024

## ECONOMIC ENCOMIUM

**A glowing 10-year report card must not stoke complacency on what remains undone.**

The Finance Ministry's 10-year economic review anticipates India's GDP to reach close to 7% in 2024-25, potentially surpassing 7% by 2030. The economy is projected to grow from \$3.7 trillion to \$5 trillion in three years, becoming the world's third-largest, and aiming for \$7 trillion by 2030. The review divides India's growth into two phases, emphasizing the transformative growth since 2014. Post-2014 reforms are credited with restoring the economy's ability to grow healthily, making India the fastest-growing G-20 nation. Despite achieving 7% growth when the global economy grows 2%, challenges like the twin-balance sheet problem persist. The review emphasizes the need for a broader private investment revival linked to consumption rebound. It underscores the importance of an all-inclusive welfare approach, reforms in learning outcomes, health, and easier compliances for smaller firms. The report also calls for addressing flaws in reforms like GST and reconsidering policy tools, such as import licenses and price controls, for a more coherent economic strategy.

