



14/04/24 - 20/05/24



THE DESERVING INDIA

# C.A. SHORTS

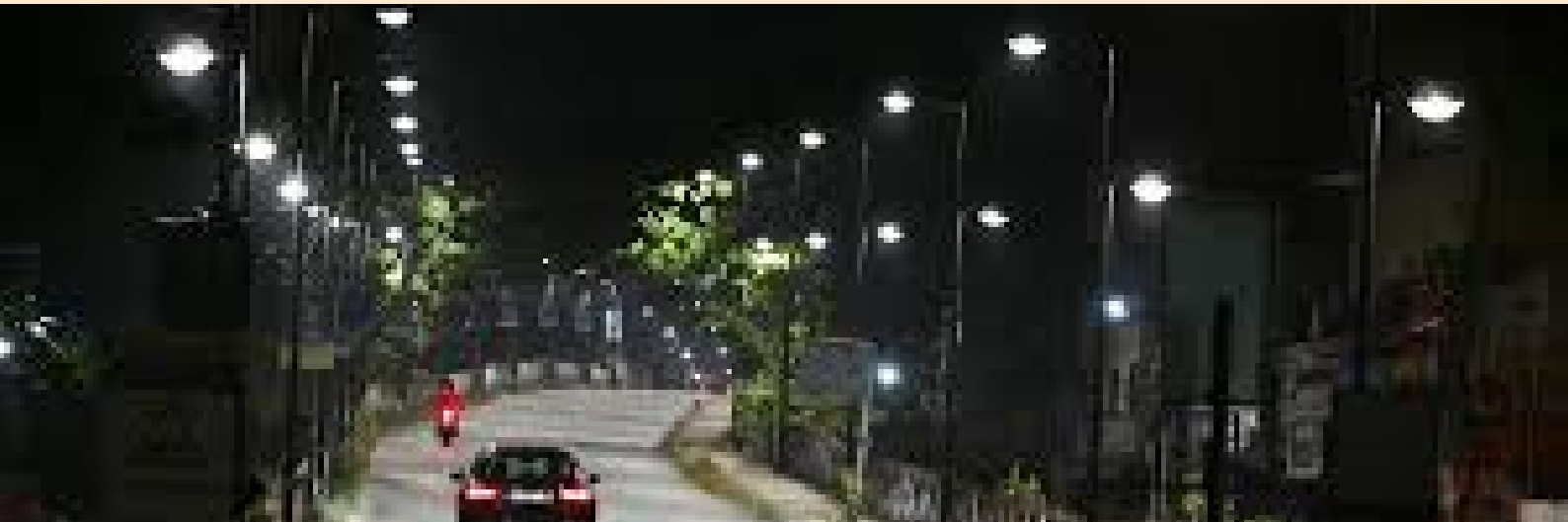
GAGAN - THE DESERVING INDIA





## SEMAL TREES ARE BEING WIPED OUT IN RAJASTHAN DUE TO UDAIPUR'S HOLI

- **Holika Dahan in Udaipur's Subash Chowk:** A vibrant celebration featuring music, firecrackers, and a towering bonfire symbolizing victory of good over evil, drawing locals and tourists alike.
- **Ecological significance of the silk cotton tree (Semal):** Integral to the ecosystem, providing medicinal value, habitat for wildlife, and resources for tribal communities, but facing threats from overexploitation during Holi festivities.
- **Conservation efforts and challenges:** Initiatives like the 'Semal Conservation Mission' aiming to raise awareness and protect the tree, yet hindered by lack of documentation, enforcement of laws, and urban demand driving its exploitation.



## **AN OVERVIEW OF THE SMART CITIES MISSION**

Smart cities are cities that urban experts say are like new Silicon Valleys. They're designed with lots of ways to travel and communicate, like airports and highways. They're also supposed to be really smart, using advanced technology.

As of April 26, the Urban Ministry's dashboard shows that out of 8,033 projects planned for Smart Cities, the total money set aside for them has dropped from an expected ₹2 lakh crore to ₹1,67,875 crore. That's 16% less than what was planned for 100 cities.

The Smart Cities Mission (SCM) ended up favouring only small parts of cities for development, leaving out most areas. It didn't really match what's happening in real urban areas in India.



## SC DENIES HEMANT SOREN'S PETITION FOR INTERIM BAIL

Senior lawyer Kapil Sibal urged the Supreme Court to list the case of former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on May 17, the last working day before a long holiday, to allow Soren to campaign for the Lok Sabha election. However, Justice Khanna, citing the court's heavy workload, stated that May 20 was the earliest available date.

The Supreme Court refused interim bail for Hemant Soren to campaign in the ongoing general election but agreed to list his plea to quash his arrest by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on May 20. Justice Khanna highlighted the need for the ED to prepare a response and pointed out that campaigning would end 48 hours before the voting day on May 20.

Despite Sibal's fervent appeal for an earlier date, the court finally agreed to list the case on May 17 but cautioned Sibal to remain cautious about the outcome. Sibal expressed his disappointment, indicating that if the case was not resolved before May 20, the opportunity to participate in the elections would be lost.





## **MORE SOLAR STORMS BREWING AFTER LAST WEEK'S AURORAE AS SUN 'WAKES UP'**

- **Solar storms don't happen often, maybe once every few decades. The last big one like this was in 2003. They usually occur when the Sun is at its busiest.**
- **Scientists watching a sunspot called AR 3664 saw it getting bigger. By May 7, it was 16 times wider than Earth and full of magnetic energy. On May 10, three bursts of charged particles hit Earth.**
- **Back in 1859, the Sun let out a massive solar flare that caused a huge magnetic storm on Earth, the strongest ever recorded. Telegraph wires either caught fire or worked without needing power.**



## **FIERCE BATTLES RAGE ACROSS GAZA STRIP AS U.S. CALLS FOR TRUCE, POST-WAR PLAN**

- **Israeli troops clashed with Hamas militants in Gaza, causing more Palestinians to flee.**
- **The United States called for a ceasefire and urged Israel to plan for peace to avoid prolonged conflict.**
- **Talks for a ceasefire and hostage release have stalled, with Qatar expressing disappointment.**



## CHINA-MYANMAR MODULE OF NSCN-IM HELPED BANNED OUTFITS IN MANIPUR: NIA

- The National Investigation Agency (NIA) claims that the Isak-Muivah faction of NSCN-IM, through its "China-Myanmar module," supported banned Meitei outfits to enter India from Myanmar. Their aim was to exploit ethnic tensions in Manipur and destabilize the state, ultimately waging war against the Indian government.
- The chargesheet, filed against five individuals arrested in Manipur in July last year, alleges they conspired to carry out violent attacks against the rival Kuki-Zo community using weapons stolen from government sources.
- Anand Singh, the main accused, allegedly recruited local youth for armed training to escalate ethnic strife. He participated in a weapons training camp organized by PLA cadres in July 2023, where he assisted in training youth in handling firearms and jungle warfare. The NIA claims NSCN-IM facilitated the infiltration of these Meitei outfits into Indian territory to carry out terrorist attacks, promising them safe passage and weapons.



## **EXERCISE DUSTLIK**

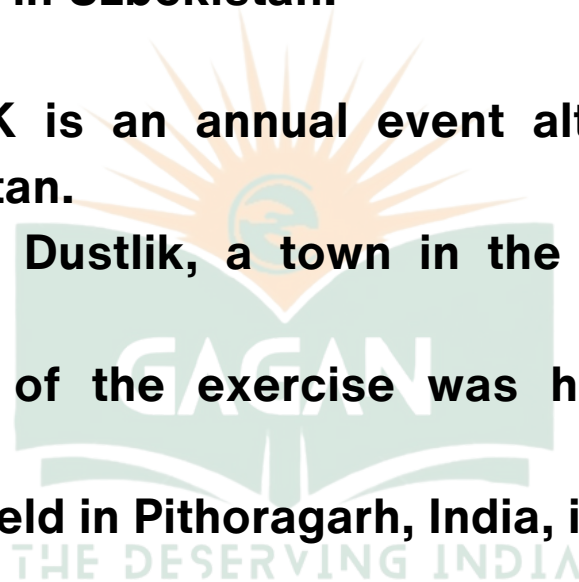
**The Indian Army contingent departed for the 5th edition of exercise DUSTLIK in Uzbekistan.**

**Exercise DUSTLIK is an annual event alternating between India and Uzbekistan.**

**It is named after Dustlik, a town in the Jizzakh region of Uzbekistan.**

**The first edition of the exercise was held in 2019 near Tashkent.**

**Previous edition held in Pithoragarh, India, in February 2023.**

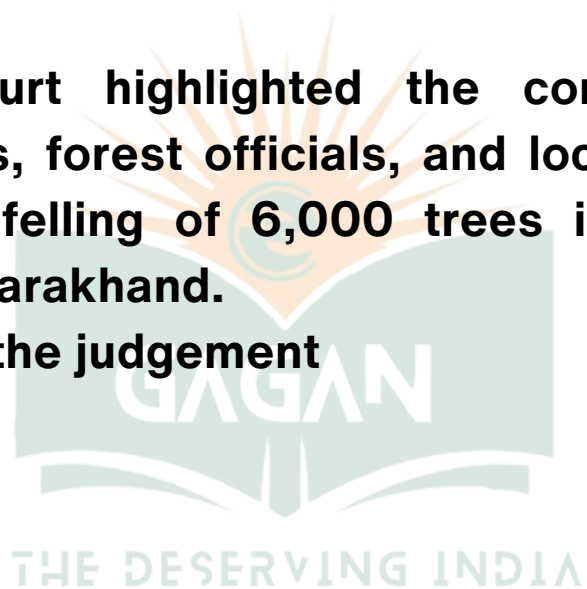




## **JIM CORBETT**

**The Supreme Court highlighted the corrupt collaboration between politicians, forest officials, and local contractors that led to the illegal felling of 6,000 trees in the Jim Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand.**

**Key points related the judgement**







## **SHIFT FROM ANTHROPOCENTRISM TO ECOCENTRISM:**

**The Supreme Court emphasized the need for an eco-centric approach rather than anthropocentrism in ecotourism management.**

**Ban on Tiger Safaris in Core Areas: : The court disagreed with the 2019 guidelines of the National Tiger Conservation Authority permitting tiger safaris on the lines of a zoo in national parks, The court directed the banning of tiger safaris in core areas of national parks, aiming to minimise environmental damage and disturbance to wildlife habitats.**

**Index of Industrial Production grows by 5.7% in February, 2024**

**India's Index of Industrial Production increased by 5.7% in February, up from 3.8% in January, according to data from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.**

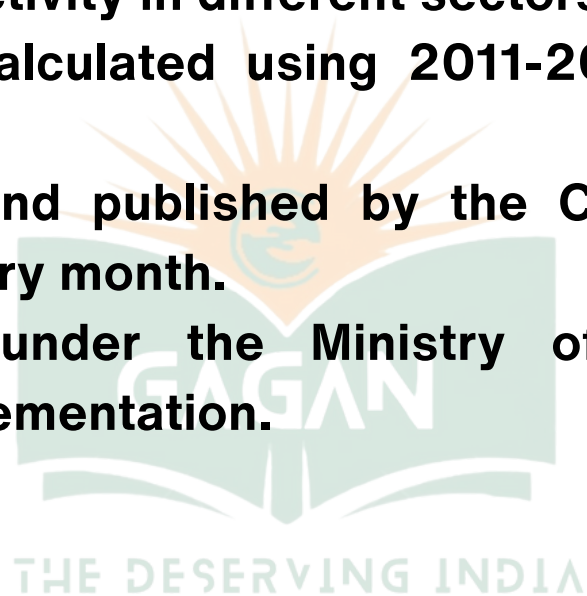


## **WHAT IS THE INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION (IIP)?**

**IIP as it is commonly called is an index that tracks overall manufacturing activity in different sectors of an economy. It is currently calculated using 2011-2012 as the base year.**

**It is compiled and published by the Central Statistical Organisation every month.**

**CSO operates under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.**





## MAHAD SATYAGRAHA: A LANDMARK EVENT IN THE DALIT MOVEMENT

The Mahad Satyagraha is hailed as the foundational event of the Dalit movement, marking the community's collective rejection of the caste system and assertion of human rights.

The Mahad Satyagraha, also known as Chavdar Tale (Lake) Satyagraha, was led by B. R. Ambedkar on 20 March 1927 in Mahad, Raigad District of Maharashtra.

Its aim was to assert the right of untouchables to use water from a public tank.

### **Background:**

Untouchables were segregated in Indian society and banned from using public water bodies and roads used by other Hindu castes.

In August 1923, the Bombay Legislative Council passed a resolution allowing depressed classes to use government-maintained places, but it faced opposition from savarna Hindus



## **EXOATMOSPHERIC INTERCEPTION**

**Israel successfully intercepted an Iranian missile outside Earth's atmosphere using an Exoatmospheric kill vehicle.**

### **What are Exoatmospheric Missiles?**

**Exoatmospheric missiles, or anti-ballistic missiles, operate beyond Earth's atmosphere to intercept incoming ballistic missiles.**

**They employ advanced sensors and guidance systems to detect, track, and destroy targets in space.**

**Kinetic kill vehicles, like the Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle, rely on high-speed collisions to neutralise threats.**

**It travels at hypersonic speed.**



## **POMPEII**

**Archaeologists in Pompeii recently uncovered a black-walled banqueting hall adorned with vivid frescoes depicting scenes from Greek mythology.**

### **About Pompeii:**

**It is a preserved ancient Roman city located near modern day Naples, Italy.**

**It lies at the southeastern base of Mount Vesuvius.**

**Pompeii was built on a spur formed by a prehistoric lava flow to the north of the mouth of the Sarno River.**

**It was conquered and absorbed into the Roman Empire in 80 BCE.**





## **LAKE KARIBA**

**Water levels at Lake Kariba in Zimbabwe have dropped dramatically because of the latest El Nino drought.**

### **About Lake Kariba:**

**It is the world's largest man-made lake and reservoir by volume.**

**It lies approximately 1300 kilometres upstream from the Indian Ocean, along the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe.**

**It is 200 km downstream of Victoria Falls.**

**The lake was filled following the completion of the Kariba Dam wall at its northeastern end, flooding the Kariba Gorge on the Zambezi River.**



## **WHAT IS COMBINED MARITIME FORCES (CMF)?**

**INS Talwar of the Indian Navy recently seized 940 kg of drugs in the Arabian Sea as part of an operation led by the Combined Maritime Forces.**

### **About Combined Maritime Forces (CMF)**

**It is a multinational naval partnership based in Bahrain which exists to promote security, stability, and prosperity across approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters, which encompass some of the world's most important shipping lanes.**

**CMF's main focus areas are defeating terrorism, preventing piracy, encouraging regional cooperation, and promoting a safe maritime environment.**

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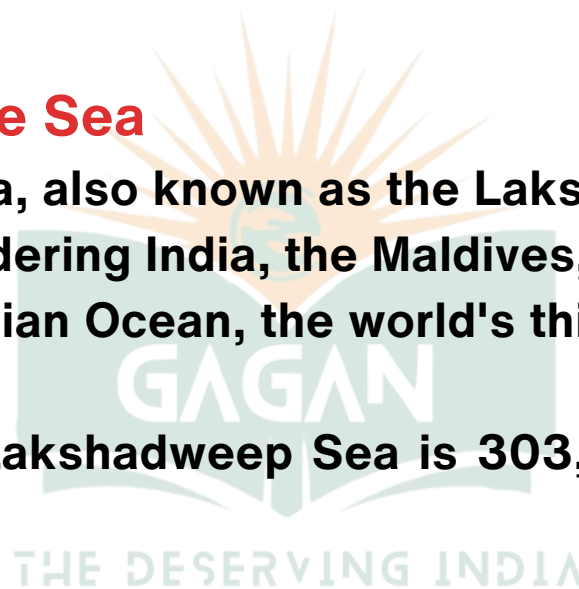
## **LACCADIVE SEA**

**Three fish species that live in the Laccadive Sea off the southwest corner of the Indian coast, capable of using tools, were recently found.**

### **About Laccadive Sea**

**The Laccadive Sea, also known as the Lakshadweep Sea, is a body of water bordering India, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka. It is part of the Indian Ocean, the world's third-largest body of water.**

**Collectively, the Lakshadweep Sea is 303,476 square miles in area.**





## **WHAT IS IMPORTED INFLATION?**

**The Asian Development Bank recently warned that India could face imported inflation as the rupee could depreciate amid the rise in interest rates in the West.**

### **About Imported Inflation**

**Imported inflation is a general and sustainable price increase due to an increase in the costs of imported products.**

**This price increase concerns the price of raw materials and all imported products or services used by companies in a country.**

**Imported inflation is also referred to as cost inflation.**



## **INDIAN NAVY'S SUBMERSIBLE PLATFORM 'SPACE' INAUGURATED**

**The Indian Navy inaugurated a state-of-the-art Submersible Platform for Acoustic Characterization and Evaluation in Kerala's Idukki.**

### **Components of SPACE Submersible**

**The SPACE consists of two main components: a platform that floats on the water surface and a submersible platform that can be lowered to depths up to 100 metres using winch systems.**

**The submersible platform can be easily winched up and docked with the floating platform after completing operations.**





## PAYTM APPROVED BY NPCI FOR USER BANK MIGRATION

Paytm has received approval from the National Payments Corporation of India to migrate its users to other banks for Unified Payments Interface based payment services.

### NPCI Approval and Integration

On March 14, 2024, NPCI allowed Paytm to migrate into a Third-Party Application Provider model with the four aforementioned banks.

### About Paytm.

Offers digital payment services, including mobile recharges, utility bill payments, and QR code-based transactions

Launched Paytm Wallet, a mobile-based payment solution, in 2014  
Introduced Paytm Payments Bank in 2017, which later faced regulatory issues

Listed on Indian stock exchanges in 2021, raising \$2.5 billion in India's largest-ever IPO.



## **SAKSHAM APP FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Election Commission of India has launched the Saksham app, a mobile application designed to facilitate voter registration and electoral services for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).**

**Aims : To make the voting process more accessible and inclusive by providing customised services to PwDs, ensuring their active participation in the democratic process.**

**Key Features of the Saksham App**

**New Voter Registration**

**Existing Voter Services**

**Home Visit by Booth-Level Officer**

**Accessibility Features**

**Polling Station Information**

**Complaint Filing**



## **INDIA'S RISING PULSES IMPORTS**

**India, despite being a major producer and consumer of pulses, has seen a significant increase in pulses imports in the 2023-24 fiscal year.**

**Imports have nearly doubled to USD 3.74 billion, with shipments having surpassed 45 lakh tonnes, compared to 24.5 lakh tonnes in the previous year.**

**Factors Affecting Domestic Production.**

**Several factors have contributed to the decline in domestic pulses production, including:**

**Erratic weather conditions in major pulses-producing states.  
Shift in cropping patterns due to better returns from other crops.**

**Pest and disease outbreaks affecting yield and quality.**

**Inadequate post-harvest storage and processing infrastructure.**



## SPACE TESTING & EVALUATION HUB FOR SONAR SYSTEMS

A state-of-the-art SPACE testing and evaluation hub for sonar systems, designed for the Indian Navy, was inaugurated by DRDO. About Submersible Platform for Acoustic Characterisation and Evaluation

The SPACE is located at the Underwater Acoustic Research Facility in Kulamavu, Idukki, Kerala.

It is developed by the Naval Physical & Oceanographic Laboratory of DRDO.

It is set to become a premier testing and evaluation hub for sonar systems deployed on various Indian Navy platforms, including ships, submarines, and helicopters.

## What is SONAR?

SONAR stands for “Sound Navigation and Ranging.

It’s a technique used for detecting and locating objects underwater by transmitting sound waves and analyzing the echoes they produce.



## **MOUNT RUANG IN INDONESIA ERUPTS**

**Indonesia witnessed a series of eruptions from Mount Ruang, a stratovolcano located in North Sulawesi Province.**

### **About Mount Ruang**

**Ruang is situated in the Sangihe Islands arc, North Sulawesi, Indonesia.**

**It comprises an island that is 4 by 5 kilometres wide, with a summit containing a partial lava dome reaching an altitude of 725 metres (2,379 ft).**

**From its summit, peaks such as Klabat, Siau, and Ternate can be observed in the south, north, and east, respectively.**

**The volcano's first recorded eruption was in 1808.**





## **BHOJSHALA-KAMAL MAULA COMPLEX DISPUTE**

The Supreme Court has issued a cautionary note to Archaeological Survey of India barring any physical excavation that could alter the character of the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula Complex.

**Controversy over Bhojshala Complex**

### **Religious Claims:**

Hindus regard the site as the temple of Goddess Wagdevi (Saraswati), while Muslims believe it to be the Kamal Maula mosque.

### **Usage Agreement:**

The Archaeological Survey of India allows Hindus to pray on Tuesdays and Vasant Panchami, and Muslims to offer namaz on Fridays,



## OPERATION JUMBO TO CAPTURE WILD ELEPHANTS

The Forest Department has resumed Operation Jumbo to capture trouble-causing wild elephants and fix radio collars in Hassan division of Karnataka.

### What is Operation Jumbo?

Operation Jumbo is a campaign launched by the Karnataka government to capture and radio-collar rogue wild elephants that frequently enter human habitations.

It is effective in five districts of the state, namely Hassan, Chikkamagaluru, Kodagu, Ramanagara, and Bengaluru.

The objective of this operation is to manage elephant movement and mitigate conflicts through continuous tracking using GPS-equipped radio collars, which have a battery life of three years.



## **INDIA'S SURGE IN PULSES IMPORTS: A SIX-YEAR HIGH**

India's pulses imports in fiscal 2024 witnessed a remarkable surge, soaring by 84% year-on-year to their highest level in six years.

Lower production levels prompted India to permit duty-free imports of red lentils (Masoor) and yellow peas, further driving the increase in imports.

**Pulses Production in India:**

India is the largest producer (25% of global production), consumer (27% of world consumption) and importer (14%) of pulses in the world.

Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka are the top five pulses producing States.



# AfricaCDC

Centres for Disease Control  
and Prevention

## **AFRICA CDC SLAMS MODERNA'S KENYA REVERSAL**

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has expressed disappointment and criticism towards Moderna Inc.'s decision to reconsider its plans for building a \$500 million vaccine manufacturing facility in Kenya.

Moderna, known for its COVID-19 vaccine, had announced the investment in October 2021 to support the production of its mRNA vaccine portfolio in Africa.

### **About GAVI**

GAVI (Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization) is a public-private global health partnership.

It was launched in 2000 to improve access to vaccines for children in the world's poorest countries.

It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.



## ANTARCTICA ICE SHELF EXPERIENCES JUMPS

Recently, Researchers have discovered that the Ross Ice Shelf in Antarctica, roughly the size of France, is experiencing sudden movements of 6 to 8 centimetres once or twice a day. These movements are triggered by the Whillans Ice Stream, a fast-flowing river of ice that occasionally gets stuck and then surges forward. The discovery highlights a previously unknown aspect of ice shelf dynamics and raises concerns about the long-term stability of the Ross Ice Shelf in the face of climate change.

## Euvichol-S : WHO Approves New Oral Cholera Vaccine

Recently, the World Health Organization prequalified a new oral cholera vaccine called Euvichol-S, manufactured by EuBiologics Co., Ltd. in South Korea. The vaccine has a similar efficacy to existing cholera vaccines but features a simplified formulation that allows for faster and more cost-effective production. This prequalification is expected to increase the global supply of oral cholera vaccines and help combat the ongoing global surge in cholera outbreaks.

### About Euvichol-S Vaccine

Euvichol-S is a simplified version of the existing Euvichol-Plus vaccine, also produced by EuBiologics. The new formulation reduces the number of vaccine components while maintaining its effectiveness against key cholerae serogroups.



## **PYOLI-1-2 AND HWASAL-1 RA-3: NORTH KOREA TESTS CRUISE MISSILE WARHEAD**

North Korea has conducted tests on a new “super-large” warhead designed for the Hwasal-1 Ra-3 strategic cruise missile, as well as a new type of anti-aircraft missile called the Pyoljji-1-2.

### **About Hwasal-1 Ra-3**

Hwasal-1 Ra-3 is a strategic cruise missile developed by North Korea.

It is designed to carry a “super-large” warhead and can likely strike targets across South Korea and Japan.

The development of the Hwasal-1 Ra-3 is part of North Korea’s efforts to enhance its standoff strike capabilities against regional adversaries.

Its range and warhead size make it a significant addition to North Korea’s missile arsenal.

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