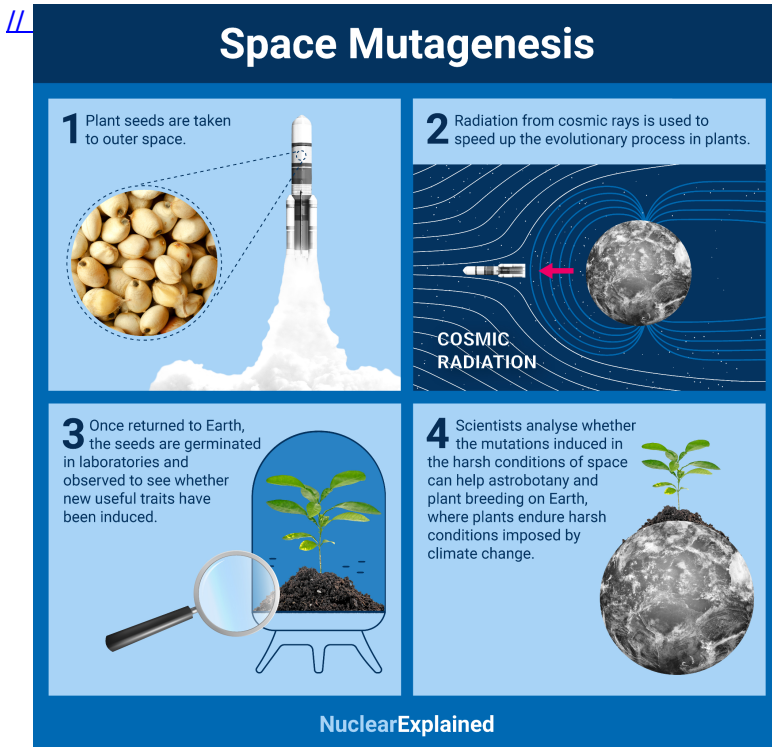




Rapid Fire Current Affairs

Space Seeds for Food Security



The [International Atomic Energy Agency \(IAEA\)](#) and the [Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\)](#) are accelerating research to develop climate-tolerant crops.

Two varieties of seeds — **arabidopsis** (a plant of the cabbage family) and **sorghum** (jowar, cholam, or jonna), sent to space in 2022 to make them climate-tolerant by exposing them to harsher surroundings returned to the Earth in March 2023.

Scientists will **examine the possibilities of developing resilient crops that can help provide sufficient food amid a climate crisis.** They will **also examine the impacts of cosmic radiation** (consists of high-energy charged particles, x-rays and gamma rays produced in space) **on accelerating the natural genetic adaptation of much-needed crops.**

Increased radiation creates genetic changes that would help them withstand greater temperatures, arid soils, diseases and rising sea levels.

The research is significant as (according to UN estimates), **rising temperatures and weather disruptions have slashed global food production by almost 13% since 1961.** Global warming is making it difficult for farmers to sustain yields. The **rising costs for essential grains and political instability in various parts of the world ave been aggravating it.**

Read More: [Climate Change and Food Insecurity](#)

Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council



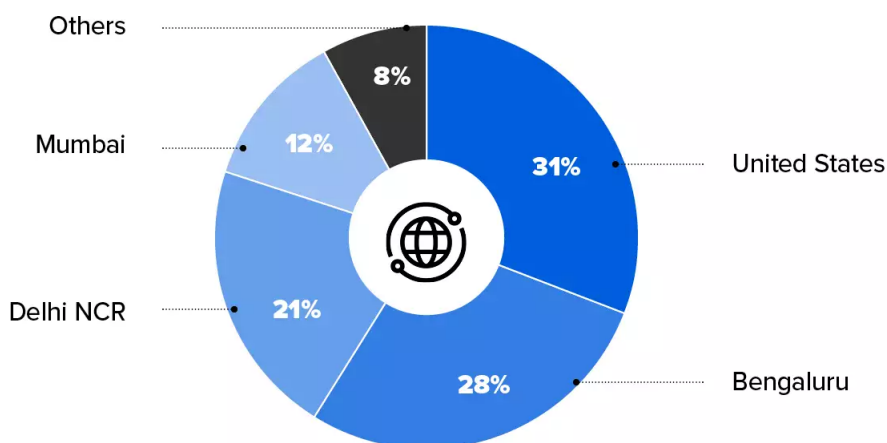
Recently, the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh, unanimously passed a **resolution seeking a ban on entry of media houses and individuals to Leh who tried to “malign the image” of the Dalai Lama.**

Dalai Lama is a title given by the Tibetan people for the foremost spiritual leader of the Gelug or "Yellow Hat" school of [Tibetan Buddhism](#), the newest of the classical schools of Tibetan Buddhism. LAHDC is an **autonomous district council that administers the Leh district of Ladakh.** The council was **created under the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Act of 1995.**

Read More: [Dalai Lama](#), [Ladakh’s Demand for Sixth Schedule](#)

Global Unicorn Index

Indian unicorns across geographies



According to the **Global Unicorn Index 2023** by Hurun, Swiggy, Dream11 and BYJU'S are **India's top unicorns**.

A **unicorn is any privately owned firm with a market capitalization of more than USD 1 billion**. It denotes new entities **dedicated to offering creative solutions and new business models**, among other things.

The report indicates that **India continues to be the world's third-largest country with the highest number of unicorns**, following the US and China. However, **India ranks fifth in the Hurun Global 500 companies**, which is a list of the most valuable non-state-controlled businesses globally.

As per the report, **the number of Indian unicorns established outside of India is higher than those located within India**. India has a **total of 138 unicorns**.

The report also revealed that **India ranks third in terms of the number of gazelles**, which are startups established in the 2000s and valued at over \$500 million (not yet listed) which are **likely to become unicorns within three years**.

Read More: [India's Startup Ecosystem](#)

Exercise INIOCHOS-23

The Indian Air Force (IAF) will be participating in Exercise INIOCHOS-23, **a multi-national air exercise hosted by the Hellenic Air Force (Greece) from April 24 to May 4**. The IAF is **currently participating in [exercise Cope India with the US](#)**, as well as a multilateral **[exercise Orion hosted by France](#)**.

The IAF will be participating in INIOCHOS-23 with **four [Su-30 MKI](#) and two [C-17 aircraft](#)**. **The objective of the exercise is to enhance international cooperation, synergy and interoperability** among the participating Air Forces.

Read More: [Indian Air Force](#)

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