

### **Jaya Verma Head of Railway Board**

- The Union government on Thursday appointed Jaya Verma Sinha Chairperson of the Railway Board, the top decision making body of the Railway Ministry.
- Ms. Sinha becomes the first woman to head the Board in its 118year history.

### **Less rainfall in August**

- Rainfall in August has been the lowest in over a century, with India getting 36% less rainfall than it usually does in the month.
- Of the four monsoon months, August usually sees the most amount of

rainfall (25.4 cm) after July with 28 cm.

- El Nino refers to a warming of the central Pacific that usually translates to deficient monsoon rainfall over India.
- The last time India recorded such severe deficits in August was in 2005, when the shortfall was about 25% of the normal, and in 2009, when India saw its biggest drought in half a century and August rainfall was 24% less than normal
- With the strengthening of the El Nino and

unfavorable conditions in the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, August rainfall has been markedly deficient in most of India, except in northeastern India, the Himalayan States, and parts of Tamil Nadu, show data from the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

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### **Ramon Magsaysay award**

- Surgical oncologist R. Ravi Kannan, Director of the Cachar Cancer Hospital and Research Centre (CCHRC) in

Assam, is one of the Ramon Magsaysay award winners for 2023.

- He is credited with revolutionizing cancer treatment in Assam through people centric and pro poor healthcare.
- The Ramon Magsaysay Award is an annual award established to perpetuate former Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay's example of integrity in governance, courageous service to the people, and pragmatic idealism within a democratic society.

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- The prize was established in April 1957 by the trustees of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund based in New York City with the concurrence of the Philippine government.
- It is often called the "Nobel Prize of Asia"
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### **Mental health**

- Mental health related issues are rising in India according to the Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare, which tabled its 148th report on 'Mental Health Care and Its Management in Contemporary Times', in

Parliament, earlier this month, cautioning that the country lags with inadequate staff, medical infrastructure and budgetary allocation.

- According to the panel, mental health refers to a state of well-being that enables people to cope with the stress of life.
- The Committee stated that India currently has 0.75 psychiatrists per lakh people, which is significantly low.
- The Committee observed that if India targets having three psychiatrists per lakh people, it will need 27,000 more psychiatrists.
- This scenario is similar for other professionals such as psychologists, psychiatric social

- workers, and nurses
- `There is considerable scope to improve the treatment gap.
- Reasons for the gap include lack of mental health professionals, weak infrastructure and stigma,” said the report.
- The total Budget Estimate (BE) for the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) is ₹89,155 crore.
- `In 2010, global economic losses of around \$2.5 trillion annually were attributed to poor mental health, stemming from diminished well being and productivity. This will surge to \$6 trillion by 2030.
- The latest report highlights inadequate funding for care and research. Addressing this requires not only increased financial support and expanded psychiatry residency programmes, but also establishment of positions for trained psychiatrists within institutions and district mental health programmes.
- Furthermore, ensuring an ample number of working psychologists is essential to effectively operate any mental health

facility and reduce the treatment gap.

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### **China releases new map**

On August 28, China issued what it called a “standard map” for 2023, which showed the entire State of Arunachal Pradesh, the Aksai Chin region and the South China Sea as Chinese territory, drawing protests from India, Malaysia and the Philippines.

- Beijing defended the map as “routine” and asked India to not “over

interpret” it, after the Ministry of External Affairs lodged a strong protest.

- While it may be true that the map made no new territorial claims and depicted borders as in previous Chinese maps, it is clear that the needless issuing of a new map, amid multiple, live territorial disputes, has only further complicated them.
- In the view of some observers, China’s increasingly aggressive mobilization on the Line of Actual Control, leading to the ongoing crisis that

**has plunged relations to this low level, was partly a response to India's reiteration of its claims to Aksai Chin in 2019.**

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