



## Rapid Fire Current Affairs

### Successful Test Launch of StarBerrySense

The [Indian Space Research Organisation \(ISRO\)](#) recently launched a Low-cost star sensor called [StarBerrySense](#), mounted on the [PSLV Orbital Experimental Module \(POEM\)](#), which has **performed well during its first-ever space test**. StarBerrySense is a low-cost sensor designed to quickly **calculate the orientation of a spacecraft by identifying stars in its field of view**. Developed by the Space Payloads Group at the **Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA)**, StarBerrySense is built around the **Raspberry Pi** minicomputer and is cost-effective and simple to build.

POEM is a unique initiative by ISRO that utilizes the **spent 4<sup>th</sup> stage of the PSLV** as an orbital platform for carrying out scientific experiments. The initial **results of the StarBerrySense test indicate that it withstood the harsh conditions in space and is functioning as expected, with the imaging equipment and onboard software capable of accurately calculating the pointing direction**.

**Read more:** [StarBerrySense](#)

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### Uganda Passes Anti-LGBTQ

The Ugandan parliament has passed one of the world's strictest anti-LGBTQ bills, retaining most of the harshest measures despite international condemnation. The legislation includes provisions for the death penalty for so-called "aggravated homosexuality" and a 20-year sentence for promoting homosexuality, which human rights activists say could criminalize any advocacy for [LGBTQ citizens](#). The bill also includes measures to "rehabilitate" gay people. The legislation was amended to stipulate that merely identifying as LGBTQ is not a crime and that people are only obliged to report homosexual activity when a child is involved. However, activists have dismissed the amendments as "useless". The bill now awaits the approval of the President.

**Read more:** [LGBTQIA+ Rights and Acceptance in India](#)

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### National Manufacturing Innovation Survey

Karnataka has emerged as the most innovative state in India according to the National Manufacturing Innovation Survey (NMIS) 2021-22, conducted jointly by the Department of Science and Technology and the [United Nations Industrial Development Organization](#). Survey found that Telangana, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu had the highest share of innovative firms, while Odisha, Bihar, and Jharkhand had the lowest share. The survey examined the innovation processes, outcomes, and barriers in manufacturing firms, and also studied the innovation ecosystem that affects innovation outcomes in these firms. The study showed that nearly three-fourths of the firms surveyed did not make any innovative product or business process innovation during the survey period of financial year 2017-2020. The most frequent barriers to innovation were a lack of internal funds, high innovation costs, and a lack of financing from external sources.

**Read more:** [Global Innovation Index 2022](#)

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### Bihan Mela

Bihan Mela is the **seed festival** celebrated by the **Khond Tribe in Odisha**. Preparations for this festival begin as soon as farmers have harvested **Kharif crops**, which include both hybrid and indigenous varieties of paddy, millets, maize and sorghum.

Women, who are at the helm of this festival, carefully collect seeds of the indigenous varieties and store them in earthen pots. Then, on a designated day in December, they decorate the pots with red and white motifs, place them in a bamboo basket and carry it on its head to the village where the fair is being organized. Along the way, they are accompanied by men beating drums and other traditional instruments.

Since the **Green Revolution**, farmers in the region have abandoned native crops and varieties that are naturally resistant to pests and better suited to the region's climate, the seed festival was thus introduced to help farmers return to their traditional ways of farming like **mixed cropping**.

To facilitate access to indigenous seeds, a seed bank was also set up. The bank works on a simple premise: collect and preserve indigenous seeds from across Kondh villages and lend those out to farmers. The bank is open to all Khond farmers.

The **Khonds are the largest tribal group in the state of Odisha (Scheduled Tribe)**. They are known for their rich cultural heritage, valourous martial traditions, and indigenous values which centre on harmony with nature. Khonds speak the Kui language and write it in the Odia script.

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