

Addar Khobor Khoborer Adda CURRENT AFFAIRS

Important for WBCS, Kolkata Police, West Bengal Police,
WBPS Food SI, Rail, Bank, SSC All Exams

HIGHLIGHTED POINTS

First AI school opened in
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

Mecha Sandesh of Bankura
is Going to get a GI tag

India became the Fourth Country to
Successfully Land on the moon

Telangana Government Recently
Launched the Griha Lakshmi Scheme 2023

New Amravati Station Becomes the Third
'Pink Station' of the Central Railway



Contents

Bangla Current Affairs Magazine (English)- August 2023	3
National News	3
International News	9
State News	12
West Bengal News	17
Economy News	19
Rankings & Reports News.....	20
Business News.....	22
Agreement News.....	24
Appointment News	26
Banking News.....	28
Science & Technology News	31
Schemes and Committees News	33
Summits & Conference News	36
Awards & Honors News.....	38
Important Dates News	39
Sports News	43
Obituaries News	47
Defence News	48
Books & Authors News.....	50
Miscellaneous News.....	51

Bangla Current Affairs Magazine (English)- August 2023

National News

Centre forms Expert Panel to revise anti-discrimination Guidelines on Campuses

The Union Education Ministry on 2nd August constituted an Expert Panel to revise anti-discrimination guidelines with respect to the Scheduled caste, ST, OBC, person with disabilities and other minorities in higher educational institution. The primary objective of the expert panel is to undertake a comprehensive review of existing anti-discriminatory policies and practices on campuses, identifying gaps and shortcomings and propose improvements. The panel will assess the efficiency of current anti-discrimination guidelines with respect to the SC, ST, OBS and other minorities in higher education institutions and examine their implementation. Based on the findings, the panel will propose necessary revisions and updates to the existing guidelines.

Parliament Passes Bill Allowing Private Sector to Mine Lithium and Other Atomic Minerals

The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2023, was recently passed by the Indian Parliament, enabling the private sector to undertake mining operations for six out of 12 atomic minerals, including lithium, as well as deep-seated minerals like gold and silver. This landmark decision seeks to boost domestic exploration and production of critical minerals and accelerate the growth of industries relying on these resources. The Bill grants permission to private companies to mine and explore previously reserved atomic minerals, fostering increased competition and investment in the sector. Lithium, beryllium, niobium, titanium, tantalum, and zirconium are among the atomic minerals now open for exploration by private entities. Deep-seated minerals, including gold, silver, copper, zinc, lead, nickel, cobalt, platinum group minerals, and diamonds, will also be available for private sector mining and auction.



Bengali

MISSION

WB FOOD SI

অনলাইন লাইভ ক্লাস+ রেকর্ডেড ভিডিও +
ই বুক + হাতে লেখা নোটস্ + মক টেস্ট

Start Date: 29 Sept 2023

Lok Sabha Passes Delhi Ordinance Bill Amid Protests

The Lok Sabha passed the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2023, replacing the ordinance on control of services in Delhi. The passage of the Bill was met with protests and a walkout by some Opposition parties. Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched a scathing attack on the Opposition during the debate on the Bill, accusing them of being more concerned about their alliance than democracy or the welfare of the people. He expressed confidence that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would secure a complete majority in the 2024 elections despite any Opposition alliance. During the proceedings, the AAP's lone Lok Sabha member, Sushil Singh Rinku, created a disturbance by going to the well of the House, tearing papers, and throwing them towards the Speaker, Om Birla. As a consequence, Rinku was suspended for the rest of the session. The Opposition parties, who had been protesting to demand a statement from PM Modi on Manipur, returned to participate in House proceedings for the first time during this session.

NHAI launches mobile app 'Rajmargyatra' for national highway users

To improve the highway user experience and offer seamless travel on Indian National Highways, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has taken a significant step by introducing the 'Rajmargyatra' mobile application. This unified app aims to provide comprehensive information and efficient complaint redressal for national highway users, making travel safer and more convenient. The 'Rajmargyatra' app is designed to be user-friendly and is available for download on both the Google Play Store and iOS App Store. This availability makes it accessible to a wide range of travellers who can now access comprehensive information about Indian National Highways at their fingertips. The app is currently available in both Hindi and English, catering to users across various linguistic backgrounds.

President of India inaugurates 'unmesha' and 'utkarsh' festivals

The President of India commenced the 'Unmesha' International Literature Festival and the 'Utkarsh' Festival of Folk and Tribal Performing Arts in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. These festivals, organized by the Sahitya Akademi and Sangeet Natak Akademi, respectively, have a shared purpose of celebrating inclusivity and cultural diversity in the region. With the participation of over 800 artists from various states and Union Territories, the events promise to be a vibrant showcase of artistic expressions. The 'Unmesha' festival spans three days and brings together literary enthusiasts from around the world, providing a platform for intellectual exchange and creative discussions. On the other hand, 'Utkarsh' honors the rich heritage of folk and tribal traditions in India, offering a stage for these expressive art forms to thrive and captivate the audience.

MASI Portal for Monitoring CHILD CARE HOMES

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has developed The 'MASI' application for real-time monitoring of Child Care Institutions (CCIs) and their inspection process across the country. The primary objective behind the development of the Monitoring App for Seamless Inspection (MASI) is to ensure the effective and efficient functioning of the inspection mechanism for CCIs as provided under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015. The app aims to synchronize the monitoring of the system by various authorities, including Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), State Inspection Committees, District Inspection Committees, Members of Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCRs). MASI serves as a single platform for inspections of all CCIs across the country, enabling any of the above-stated authorities to conduct unified inspections. The application is linked to a monitoring portal, where automatic reports are generated, ensuring real-time updates on the status of CCIs.

98,911 No of entities recognised by Govt as startups

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has recognized 98,911 entities under the Startup India initiative since its launch on January 16, 2016. The primary goal behind this initiative is to create a robust ecosystem that fosters innovation, encourages entrepreneurship, and attracts private investments in the startup sector, thereby driving sustainable economic growth and generating employment opportunities on a large scale. Unlike traditional businesses, measuring the success or failure of startups is a complex task. Regular businesses are often evaluated based on their performance over a specific number of years of operation. However, startups and scale-ups, which are established startups, operate differently. They undergo various stages of growth, and their success or failure is more accurately measured in different phases of their development.

Below is a table presenting the number of entities recognized as startups by DPIIT (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade) as of the year 2023:

Year	Number of Recognized Startups
2018	8,635
2019	11,279
2020	14,498
2021	20,046
2022	26,542
2023	17,911

Privilege Motion in News

Recently, the Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Jaydeep Dhanekar raised complaints against two prominent opposition members- Derek O'Brien from the TMC and Raghav Chadha from Aam Aadmi Party. The complaints, which pertain to alleged breaches of parliamentary privileges, have further intensified the ongoing political tussle during the sittings. According to the Rajya Sabha secretariat, notice against Derek O'Brien was filed for publishing the clippings of his statement made in the House on his Twitter handle, despite those being removed from the record by the Chairman. The complaint against Raghav Chadha alleges an intentional and deliberate act of presenting misleading facts to the media with respect to the suspension of an Aam Aadmi Party's MP, Sanjay Singh, from the remaining period of the Monsoon session of the Rajya Sabha. All the Members of Parliament enjoy rights and immunities, individually and collectively, so that they can discharge their duties and functions efficiently. Any instance when these rights and immunities are disregarded by any member of Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha is an offence, called 'breach of privilege', which is punishable under the Laws of Parliament. Any member from either house can move a notice in the form of a motion against the member who he/she thinks is guilty of the breach of privilege.

Cabinet approves Rs 1.39 lakh cr for connecting 6.4 lakh villages with broadband

The Union Cabinet has approved the final phase of the last-mile optical fiber-based broadband connectivity plan, covering 6.4 lakh villages across India under the BharatNet project. This initiative is supported by a budget of Rs 1.39 lakh crore. Through this enhancement, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) seeks to accelerate the endeavor of linking all 6.4 lakh villages within the upcoming two and a half years. The ongoing progress has seen nearly 1.94 lakh villages already integrated into the BharatNet project. Beyond its financial implications, this initiative bears the potential to generate a substantial employment opportunity, envisaging a staggering 250,000 jobs. This visionary project crystallized its form subsequent to a meticulously executed pilot program across four districts, achieving an impressive expansion to encompass 60,000 villages across the nation within a mere year.

Govt to investigate 'Havana syndrome' in India. Know all about mystery illness

The Indian government has recently taken a significant step by committing to investigate the potential existence of the perplexing 'Havana Syndrome' within its borders. This decision comes in response to a petition submitted to the Karnataka High Court by A Amarnath Chagu, a Bengaluru resident. The petitioner sought an inquiry into the enigmatic syndrome's presence in India and strategies to thwart its transmission within the country. Acknowledging the gravity

of the matter, the Centre's legal representatives have vowed to conduct a thorough investigation within a span of three months. Havana Syndrome, a term that has garnered attention worldwide, refers to a collection of psychological and physiological symptoms encountered primarily by United States intelligence and embassy personnel deployed across various nations. These symptoms encompass auditory sensations in the absence of external noises, vertigo, nausea, headaches, memory lapses, and issues with balance.

Government of India Forms New Standing Committee on Statistics to Enhance Oversight of NSO Data

In a recent development, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) of the Government of India has taken a significant step by replacing the existing Standing Committee on Economic Statistics (SCES) with a more comprehensive entity called the Standing Committee on Statistics (SCoS). This new committee has been entrusted with a broader mandate, involving the review of both the framework and outcomes of all surveys conducted under the National Statistical Office (NSO). The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) came into existence in 1999 after the merger of the Department of Statistics and the Department of Programme Implementation. It consists of two wings: the Statistics Wing and the Programme Implementation Wing. The Statistics Wing includes the Central Statistical Office (CSO), the Computer Center, and the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO). Additionally, the National Statistical Commission (NSC) and the Indian Statistical Institute are also integral components of the statistical setup.

'Har Ghar Tiranga' Bike Rally Flagged-off On Independence Day 2023

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar has flagged off the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' motorcycle rally at Pragati Maidan in Delhi. As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) initiative, the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign is scheduled to take place nationwide from August 13 to 15. The campaign aims to inspire individuals to proudly display the national flag at their residences. After the flag-off, the bike rally will reach the India Gate circle. The rally will then move in a circle around the India Gate complex, crossing the Kartavya Path and will culminate at Major Dhyani Chand Stadium. AKAM is an ongoing celebration to commemorate 75 glorious years of a progressive independent India. This initiative by the Government of India aims to bring in focus on the freedom struggle, and the milestones this nation has achieved. In this nationwide campaign, an appeal is made to all citizens of Sikkim to join in the celebration of the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign by hoisting the national flag at their houses, offices, etc, from August 13 to 15.

India Is Committed To Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis By 2027

Union Health & Family Welfare Minister, Mansukh Mandaviya, made the announcement to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis by 2027 during the inauguration of the second phase of the Annual Nationwide Mass Drug Administration (MDA) initiative. With a focal point on 81 districts spread across nine endemic states, including Assam and Uttar Pradesh, this second phase marks a significant step forward in the battle against the crippling disease. Minister Mandaviya emphasized the comprehensive approach of "Whole of Government" and "Whole of Society" to combat Lymphatic Filariasis effectively. He stressed the necessity for a collaborative endeavor that encompasses not just the government but also every segment of society. Minister Mandaviya recommended the consumption of medicine diligently in order to ensure the MDA initiative's effectiveness. He suggested that healthcare professionals should supervise the administration of medication. This method ensures the correct dosage and adherence, ultimately maximizing the treatment's impact and speeding up the progress towards a filariasis-free India.

Government Employee Unions Rally for Pension Rights in Delhi

Government employee unions have organized a massive rally in Delhi, named the "Pension Rights Maharally," to voice their demand for the reinstatement of the Old Pension Scheme. The rally was orchestrated by the Joint Forum for Restoration of Old Pension Scheme (JFROPS)/National Joint Council of Action (NJCA), representing central and state departments' employees. The event took place at Ramlila Maidan on August 10. The rally garnered participation from a diverse range of employees, including those from central and state departments, railways, public sector undertakings (PSUs), teaching professionals, defense personnel, and ex-paramilitary personnel from across the nation. This significant turnout highlighted the widespread concern regarding the pension scheme issue. Shiv Gopal Mishra, the NJCA's national convener and the general secretary of All India Railway Men's Federation (AIRF), addressed the media during the rally. He emphasized the dissatisfaction among employees who entered government service after January 1, 2004, due to their strong opposition to the New Pension Scheme (NPS). The primary contention lies in the uncertainty faced by employees under the NPS upon retirement, contrasting with the more secure Old Pension Scheme.

New Bill Proposes Changes in Appointment Process for Election Commissioners in India

The central government of India has recently introduced a bill in the Rajya Sabha that aims to modify the process of appointing the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners of the country. The proposed bill

includes significant changes to the composition of the selection committee responsible for these appointments. One of the notable changes proposed by the bill is the removal of the Chief Justice of India from the selection committee that determines the appointments of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners. This alteration is seen as a departure from the previous arrangement and has sparked discussions about the implications for the independence of the Election Commission.

India Aims to Triple Natural Gas Share to 15% by 2030: Minister

India is embarking on a bold journey to significantly enhance its current 6% share of natural gas within its energy mix to a robust 15% by the year 2030. This audacious endeavor is being spearheaded by Rameswar Teli, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. The government is resolutely pursuing an array of far-reaching strategies to realize this vision, as elaborated by the minister in a written response to the Lok Sabha.

The Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023: Revamping India's Criminal Justice System

Union Home Minister Amit Shah introduced three new bills in Lok Sabha to reform the criminal justice system in India. Among these bills is the Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, which aims to replace the outdated Indian Evidence Act of 1872. This move is in response to the need for legal reforms that align with technological advancements and societal changes. The Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023, seeks to consolidate and establish general rules and principles of evidence to ensure a fair trial in criminal cases. The current Indian Evidence Act is outdated and lacks provisions that cater to the modern landscape. The new bill aims to rectify this by modernizing the laws surrounding evidence and aligning them with the current needs and aspirations of the populace. In addition to the Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, two other bills have been introduced: the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, which will replace the Indian Penal Code (IPC), and the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, which will replace the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC). These bills collectively aim to revamp the legal framework pertaining to criminal justice.

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras To Be Established Across The Country

The Railways Ministry is embarking on a significant endeavor aimed at establishing Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras (PMBJKs) at railway stations throughout the country. This initiative holds the primary objective of ensuring the availability of top-notch medicines to the public, all while maintaining an affordable price point. As part of this progressive initiative, the Ministry has meticulously curated a list of fifty railway stations that will serve as the launching grounds for the pilot project. This strategic selection aims to

lay the groundwork for greater accessibility to Janaushadhi products for both passengers and visitors frequenting these bustling stations. The establishment of PMBJKs addresses the pressing healthcare requirements of passengers while fostering an improved overall experience.

Dharmendra Pradhan launches DBT in NAPS to strengthen apprenticeship ecosystem

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister for Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, inaugurated the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) in the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) to strengthen apprenticeship training and encouraging the involvement of both industries and young individuals. During the launch event, an approximate sum of Rs. 15 crores was disbursed to one lakh apprentices, signifying the official commencement of DBT in NAPS. Since its inception in 2016 until July 31, 2023, the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme has engaged a total of 25 lakh youths as apprentices. The scheme has witnessed remarkable progress, with around 2.6 lakh apprentices successfully completing their training in the fiscal year 2023-24. A notable achievement attributed to the Government of India's proactive efforts is the exponential growth in the number of active establishments participating in apprenticeship training. The count has surged from 6,755 in 2018-19 to an impressive 40,655 in 2023-24.

NCERT Constitutes 19-Member Panel for Textbook Revision in India

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), India's top advisory body for school education, has taken a significant step towards textbook revision. The council has formed a 19-member committee responsible for aligning school syllabi, textbooks, teaching materials, and learning resources with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF). The committee's mandate covers Classes 3 to 12, and it also aims to ensure a seamless transition from Classes 1 and 2 to subsequent grades. The 19-member committee responsible for the revision of school textbooks and alignment with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) comprises experts from various domains. Each member brings their unique expertise to the table, collectively working towards enhancing the educational experience for students.

Union Cabinet Approves PM-eBus Sewa Scheme: Boosting Electric Public Transportation

In a significant move towards enhancing urban transportation and promoting electric mobility, the Union Cabinet has given its nod to the "PM-eBus Sewa" scheme. This initiative is aimed at expanding city bus operations by deploying 10,000 electric buses through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. The PM-eBus Sewa scheme is projected to incur a total cost of Rs 57,613 crore. To facilitate its implementation, the Central government will provide financial support of Rs 20,000 crore. The scheme's scope extends over a period of 10 years.

Operation Jericho: How Air Force Operations Quelled the Mizoram Insurgency of 1966

The historical use of air power in Mizoram during the 1966 insurgency has recently gained attention due to its mention by Prime Minister Modi in response to a no-confidence motion. This article delves into the events surrounding the Mizoram insurgency of 1966, the government's response, the involvement of the Indian Air Force (IAF), and the aftermath of Operation Jericho. The 1960s witnessed a period of protests and insurgency in the Mizo Hills, now known as Mizoram. The Mizo National Front (MNF), seeking independence from India, spearheaded a separatist movement. The central government's decision to station additional Assam Rifles battalions in the region sparked outrage and led to the launch of 'Operation Jericho' by MNF. Operation Jericho aimed to seize control of Aizawl, resulting in its successful occupation in late February. Notably, this operation was characterized by meticulous planning and confidence rarely seen in the Indian subcontinent. Many armed volunteers were ex-servicemen or former Assam Regiment personnel dismissed for disciplinary issues. The rebels besieged the headquarters of 1 Assam Rifles, released prisoners, looted arms and funds, and declared independence. Brigadier Rustom Zal Kabraji led ground operations to clear rebel-held positions. He commanded the 61 Mountain Brigade based in Agartala. Despite efforts to resupply the Assam Rifles battalion via helicopters, rebel resistance led to the shooting down of some supply missions. The ground operations faced formidable opposition, requiring several days to reach Aizawl.

India's First 3D-Printed Post Office Inaugurated In Bengaluru

Bengaluru, often hailed as nation's tech capital, has welcomed the India's first 3D-printed post office. Located in Cambridge Layout near Ulsoor, this post office has set a new benchmark for efficiency, sustainability, and design. Inaugurating the post office, Ashwini Vaishnaw, the Union Minister for Railways, Communications, Electronics & Information Technology, commended Bengaluru's innovative spirit. The post office, encompassing an area of 1,021 square feet, was swiftly completed in just 43 days – a remarkable departure from the conventional construction period of around 10 months. Employing quick-setting materials and a specially engineered robotic arm extruder, the technique known as contour crafting was utilized to construct the building's intricate design. This method allowed for precise layering, resulting in a unique and visually captivating structure. This architectural marvel was brought to life through a collaboration between Larsen and Toubro, a prominent construction company, and technical guidance from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras. The project, originally slated for completion in September of the previous year, saw its culmination in May 2023 at a cost of Rs 23 lakh.

CWC Launches 'Floodwatch' To Provide Real-Time Flood Forecasts To Public

The Chairman, Central Water Commission (CWC), Shri Kushvinder Vohra, has taken a groundbreaking step towards enhancing flood preparedness and response by unveiling the "FloodWatch" mobile application. This revolutionary app is designed to harness the power of mobile phones to disseminate real-time flood-related information and forecasts to the public, up to 7 days in advance. The app, which offers both readable and audio broadcasts, is available in two languages, English and Hindi, making it accessible to a wider audience. The core functionality of the "FloodWatch" app revolves around providing real-time flood monitoring. Users can conveniently access up-to-date flood situation reports from across the country. Drawing from near real-time river flow data from various reliable sources, the app empowers users with accurate and current flood-related information. One of the key features that set the "FloodWatch" app apart is its flood forecasting capabilities. Users can receive flood forecast for their nearest locations, enabling them to stay informed about potential flood threats. The app's Home Page offers easy access to flood advisories at the station closest to the user, simplifying the process of obtaining crucial information.

President Droupadi Murmu Grants Assent to Central and Integrated GST Amendment Bills, 2023

President Droupadi Murmu has officially granted her assent to two crucial pieces of legislation, namely the Central Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2023, and the Integrated Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2023. Both of these bills, which had recently received approval from the Parliament, have now become law with the President's endorsement. The Central Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2023, is designed to introduce amendments to the existing Central Goods and Services Tax Act of 2017. This bill encompasses adjustments to key definitions and provisions to better align with evolving technological and economic landscapes.

The bill adds definitions for crucial terms such as "online gaming," "online money gaming," and "virtual digital assets." It clarifies that online gaming refers to the offering of games over the internet or electronic networks, encompassing money gaming as well.

BRO Initiates Construction of World's Highest Motorable Road in Eastern Ladakh

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has embarked on a groundbreaking project to construct the 'Likaru-Mig La-Fukche' road in the Demchok sector of Ladakh. This strategic road will establish the world's highest motorable road, spanning an altitude of approximately 19,400 feet, surpassing the previous record held by Umling La Pass. The initiative was launched on India's 77th Independence Day, signifying its significance for national security.

India announces 'Green' Hydrogen standard

India has announced the definition of Green Hydrogen. The Green Hydrogen Standard for India sets a criterion of 2 kg CO2 equivalent per kg H₂ as a 12-month average emission threshold. It is a significant move for the progress of the National Green Hydrogen Mission. The guidelines established by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India, delineate the emission benchmarks that must be fulfilled for hydrogen production to qualify as 'Green', signifying its origin from renewable sources. The Ministry of New & Renewable Energy has characterized Green Hydrogen as having a well-to-gate emission (encompassing processes like water treatment, electrolysis, gas purification, hydrogen drying, and compression) that does not exceed 2 kg CO₂ equivalent per kg H₂.

Nitin Gadkari launches Bharat NCAP(New Car Assessment Programme)

The Bharat New Car Assessment Programme (Bharat NCAP) was launched by Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari on August 22, 2023, in New Delhi. The program aims to enhance road safety by elevating vehicle safety standards for up to 3.5-tonne vehicles in India. Bharat NCAP will also greatly push the safety and quality of the vehicles in India, while simultaneously promoting a healthy competition among OEMs to manufacture safer vehicles.

Finance Minister Launches HSBC India's Green Hydrogen Partnerships

In a significant step towards fostering innovation in the field of green hydrogen, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has launched strategic partnerships between HSBC India and prominent institutions, namely the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, and the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (SSEF). The collaboration, which comes with a substantial grant support totaling ₹15 crore (\$2 million), marks a pivotal moment in advancing projects that prioritize green hydrogen as a strategic alternative fuel. These initiatives are poised to play a crucial role in building a resilient green-hydrogen economy. The partnerships forged by HSBC India underline the nation's commitment to accelerating innovation in the realm of green hydrogen. As India strives to reduce its carbon footprint and make significant strides in the fight against climate change, green hydrogen has emerged as a game-changing solution that aligns perfectly with these goals. The strategic partnerships aim to channel resources and expertise into projects that will drive the adoption of green hydrogen across various sectors.

Khanan Prahari App Helping to Curb Illegal Coal Mining Activities Through Public Participation

Illegal coal mining poses a significant risk to both the environment and the economy of India. In response to this issue, the government has introduced the Khanan Prahari App. This mobile application allows citizens to report any

suspicious activities related to coal mining in their vicinity, thereby contributing to the fight against this illegal practice.

The Khanan Prahari mobile app is an initiative led by the Ministry of Coal, aimed at curbing illegal coal mining through public participation.

This app works in tandem with the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) web portal, developed in collaboration with the Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Application & Geoinformatics and CMPDI, Ranchi.

By leveraging space technology and e-governance, the government aims to address the multifaceted challenges posed by illegal coal mining.

Draupadi Murmu released Postage Stamp in memory of Dadi Prakashmani

On 25th August, 2023, a special event took place at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre as President Draupadi Murmu unveiled a postage stamp in memory of Dadi Prakashmani. This initiative has been taken on the 16th death anniversary of Dadi Prakashmani under the 'My Stamp' initiative of the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications. The commemorative postage stamp unveiled by President Draupadi Murmu on the 16th death anniversary of Dadi Prakashmani, holds a deep significance. This initiative stands as an evident to the enduring influence and remarkable contribution of Dadi Prakashmani to both spirituality and society. The stamp not only immortalizes her legacy but also symbolizes the timeless wisdom she imparted and the positive change she brought.

India, Asian Development Bank to set up climate change and health hub in Delhi

India is now all set to open a climate change and health hub in the national capital Delhi in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Earlier, India had bagged the first WHO Centre for Global Traditional Medicine. WHO Centre for Global Traditional Medicine was set up in Jamnagar, Gujarat. The new hub for climate change and health will facilitate knowledge sharing, promote partnerships and innovations, and also help countries beyond the G-20, especially developing countries. In its recently released G-20 outcome document, India also noted that climate change will continue to drive health emergencies, including the emergence and re-emergence of infectious diseases, and by increasing the severity and frequency of natural disasters, thereby threatening to overwhelm health systems' ability to deliver essential services. Prioritize climate-resilient health systems development, build sustainable and low-carbon/low greenhouse gas (GHG) emission health systems and healthcare supply chains that deliver high-quality healthcare, mobilize resources for resilient, low-carbon sustainable health systems, and Facilitate collaboration, including initiatives such as the WHO-led Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACh).

A Chapter On National War Memorial Included In NCERT Curriculum Of Class VII From This Year

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has taken a significant step towards fostering patriotism and inculcating core values in school children by introducing a new chapter in the Class 7 English textbook. The chapter, titled "A Homage to Our Brave Soldiers," revolves around the National War Memorial and its profound significance in the history of India. The newly incorporated chapter provides an insightful exploration into the history and importance of the National War Memorial. It delves into the monumental sacrifice offered by the valiant soldiers of the Armed Forces post-independence. The chapter's presentation takes the form of an exchange of heartfelt letters between two friends. Through these letters, the students express their profound gratitude for the freedoms they enjoy, which have been safeguarded by the selfless sacrifices of these bravehearts.

Akashvani organizes event related to KIP under the aegis of Ministry of External Affairs

Akashvani, India's national public radio broadcaster, organized a special event on 28th August in New Delhi as part of the Know India Programme (KIP), an initiative under the aegis of Ministry of External Affairs. The event witnessed the participation of around 55 students of Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) who had gathered from various corners of the world. The event organized on 28th August in New Delhi marks the 67th edition of the Know India Programme (KIP), an evident to the sustained commitment of the Ministry of External Affairs to connect with the Indian diaspora youth. Chandranie Sukhdeo, a student hailing from Guyana, expressed her heartfelt appreciation for the Indian Government's initiative, which has bestowed upon her the wonderful opportunity to explore the land of her ancestors. She shared her excitement about the chance to visit India's historical landmarks and experience the country's vibrant cultural heritage firsthand. Shivani Jhagroe, another participant from Suriname, described India as a second home and expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to delve deeper into the heart of her ancestral land.

International News

Beijing Faces Historic Flooding as China Witnesses Highest Rainfall in 140 Years

China's capital, Beijing, experienced a historic deluge, recording a staggering 744.8 millimeters of rainfall over the course of five days. This torrential downpour, the highest in 140 years, was triggered by the remnants of Typhoon Doksuri, leaving streets submerged and residents stranded. The disaster has resulted in tragic fatalities, with at least 21 people losing their lives and 26 others still reported missing. Beijing and the surrounding province of Hebei faced severe flooding, causing extensive damage to infrastructure and posing a significant challenge to rescue operations.

Pakistan Approves New Security Pact with the US, Signaling a Fresh Start in Defense Cooperation

In a significant development, the federal cabinet of Pakistan has quietly approved the signing of a new security pact with the United States. The Communication Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CIS-MOA) will pave the way for enhanced defense ties between the two nations and may allow Pakistan to procure military hardware from Washington DC. This move comes after the previous agreement, signed in 2005, expired in 2020. The new CIS-MOA is a foundational agreement that the US signs with its allies and partners to maintain close military and defense cooperation. It grants legal cover to the US Department of Defense for selling military equipment and hardware to other countries. By signing this pact, both Pakistan and the US are expressing their commitment to maintaining strong institutional mechanisms for defense collaboration.

Iraq becomes 18th country recognised by WHO for eliminating Trachoma

Iraq has been officially recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) as the 18th country to successfully eliminate trachoma as a public health concern. This achievement also marks Iraq as the fifth nation within the WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region to accomplish this milestone. Additionally, the WHO has acknowledged Iraq as the 50th country to eliminate at least one Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) on a global scale. This accomplishment signifies a significant step towards the goal of having 100 countries achieve similar milestones by 2030, as outlined in the 2021-2030 NTD roadmap. This roadmap aims to address and combat 20 different diseases and disease groups through prevention, control, elimination, and eradication efforts.

New COVID variant Eris spreading rapidly in UK; know signs and symptoms

A new COVID variant Eris or EG.5.1 is rapidly spreading across the country United Kingdom. Startlingly, one out of every seven COVID-19 cases in the UK is now linked to this variant. The spread of Eris is not limited only to UK but also across Europe, Asia and North America, marking its impact globally. Eris is a new variant of COVID-19 virus that has been identified in the UK. It is also known as EG.5.1. This variant is causing concern as it is spreading at a faster rate not only in UK but also across Europe, Asia and North America, marking its impact globally. UK Health Security Agency's Findings. According to the UK Health Security Agency, around 11.8% of the sequences in the UK were identified as EG.5.1 in the second week of July. The agency began closely monitoring Eris on July 3, due to increasing reports globally, especially in Asia. It was later recognised as a variant on 31st July as it was spreading rapidly, even in the UK.

Iraq bans media from using term ‘homosexuality’

The media regulatory body of Iraq has issued a prohibition on the usage of the term ‘homosexuality’ instructing both media and social media entities to employ the term ‘sexual deviance’ in its place. This directive encompasses all media and social media establishments functioning within the country, as specified by the Iraqi Communications and Media Commission (CMC). The use of these terms in any of their applications is now prohibited for all licensed CMC phone and internet companies. As a result, these companies are constrained from including “homosexuality” or “gender” in any of their mobile apps. This directive encompasses all media and social media establishments functioning within the country, as specified by the Iraqi Communications and Media Commission (CMC).

China’s July Exports Experience Double-Digit Plunge, Adding Pressure to Bolster Ailing Economy

China, facing a significant economic challenge, saw its exports plummet by double digits in July, raising concerns for the Communist Party to steer the nation’s economy out of its current slump. The decline, encompassing a 14.5% drop in exports compared to the previous year, is intensifying the urgency for policy measures to revive economic growth. In a stark demonstration of the economic challenges, China’s exports witnessed a steep decline, totaling \$281.8 billion for July. This drop was even more pronounced than the 12.4% contraction recorded in June, as per recent customs data. This trend is indicative of the weakening global demand for Chinese goods.

Australia to be testing ground for US missiles

Australia’s involvement in the AUKUS (Australia, United Kingdom, United States) pact has gained attention due to its potential role as a testing ground for advanced hypersonic and long-range precision weapons. The agreement, initially focused on supplying Australia with nuclear-powered submarines, has evolved to address the growing influence of China in the Asia-Pacific region. U.S. Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth highlighted Australia’s unique contributions and the collaborative nature of the pact. While Australia’s involvement in AUKUS includes the exchange of advanced defense technologies, Secretary Wormuth emphasized that its contribution doesn’t solely revolve around financial commitments. Australia’s strategic geographical attributes, including vast distances and sparsely populated land, make it an ideal testing ground for cutting-edge weaponry.

Pakistan’s Parliament Dissolved: Setting the Stage for National Election Amidst Crisis

In a significant political development, Pakistan’s President took the step of dissolving the country’s parliament as per the recommendation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The lower house of the Parliament’s five-year term is due to end on

August 12. This move comes at a critical juncture as Pakistan grapples with both political and economic challenges. The decision to dissolve the parliament was executed just three days prior to the culmination of the current parliamentary term. As part of the process, a caretaker administration will be established, jointly chosen by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and a representative from the outgoing parliament’s opposition leadership. This caretaker setup is designed to facilitate the holding of fresh elections within a span of 90 days. Sharif, addressing the parliament, announced his intention to advise the president to dissolve the body, setting this sequence of events in motion. Furthermore, discussions between Sharif and the opposition leader are slated to commence shortly, with a focus on selecting a caretaker prime minister from candidates proposed by both sides.

Escalating Tensions in Niger: ECOWAS Response and Regional Concerns

In the aftermath of a recent coup in Niger on July 26, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) faces a critical situation. The coup leaders have defied ECOWAS’ deadline to reinstate the ousted president, prompting discussions among regional leaders. The coup leaders in Niger have refused to comply with ECOWAS’ ultimatum to reinstate the ousted president, choosing instead to strengthen their grip on power. In a public statement, a junta representative expressed determination to defend Niger’s territorial integrity. They also called upon the country’s youth to rally behind the cause, which has garnered support from students. The closure of Niger’s airspace has already affected flight paths across Africa, disrupting air travel. The landlocked nation’s size and strategic location make it a key element in regional air routes.

Canada Starts Accepting PTE Scores For Student Direct Stream Applications

In a significant development for international students aspiring to study in Canada, the country’s Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) has officially sanctioned the use of Pearson’s PTE Academic test as an English language proficiency assessment. Earlier this year, the IRCC made a momentous decision by endorsing Pearson’s PTE Academic test as a valid measure of English language proficiency. This move acknowledges the rigorous standards and accuracy of the PTE Academic assessment, further enhancing the credibility and global recognition of this language proficiency test. Students who have taken the PTE Academic test before August 10 are eligible to benefit from this new directive. As long as these scores are submitted within the stipulated expiry period set by the IRCC, they can be used for Student Direct Stream (SDS) applications.

Anwarul Haq Kakar Sworn In As Pakistan's Caretaker Prime Minister

Anwarul Haq Kakar, a prominent ethnic Pushtun leader with close ties to the influential military, has taken the oath as the country's caretaker prime minister. With this appointment, Kakar is entrusted with the responsibility of heading an impartial administration, supervising the forthcoming general elections, and addressing the economic hurdles confronting the country. Kakar is distinguished as the youngest interim Prime Minister in the history of Pakistan. In a modest ceremony held at the President House, President Arif Alvi administered the oath to Anwarul Haq Kakar. The event was attended by outgoing Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and several prominent leaders. This moment marked Kakar's elevation to the role of the 8th interim prime minister of Pakistan. Kakar formally resigned from the Senate and the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), solidifying his commitment to the neutrality demanded by his current position. The Senate chairman acknowledged Kakar's resignation in accordance with the provisions outlined in clause (1) of Article 64 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Bubonic Plague Cases Detected in China's Inner Mongolia: Authorities Respond Swiftly

China's Inner Mongolia region has reported two cases of bubonic plague, causing concerns amid previous infections and highlighting the need for vigilant containment efforts. The new cases involve close relatives of a previously infected individual. Bubonic plague is a highly infectious disease, primarily transmitted through rodents, and can be fatal if not treated promptly. The region's health authorities are taking proactive measures to prevent the further spread of the disease. Following a prior bubonic plague infection detected on August 7, China's northern region of Inner Mongolia has once again encountered two cases of the disease. These new cases involve the husband and daughter of the previous infected person, as confirmed by the local government's official statement.

India accounts for 35% of cargo handled by Murmansk port this year

India's collaboration with Russia's Arctic region is on the rise, evidenced by its substantial contribution to cargo handled at Murmansk port. This strategic port, positioned about 2,000 km northwest of Moscow, serves as a key northern gateway for Russia, and in the first seven months of 2023, it handled a total of eight million tonnes of cargo. Notably, India's share accounted for 35% of this cargo, primarily consisting of coal destined for the eastern coast of India. India emerges as a significant player in the cargo operations of Murmansk port, responsible for 35% of the handled cargo. This impressive figure underscores India's economic and trade connections with the Arctic region. India's engagement extends to the Northern Sea Route (NSR), a crucial shipping pathway

connecting the Asia-Pacific region and western Eurasia. The NSR offers a shorter route than traditional alternatives, enhancing the efficiency and safety of maritime transport.

Srettha Thavisin Elected As Thailand Prime Minister

Thai property tycoon Srettha Thavisin has been elected as the new prime minister of Thailand following a decisive win in a parliamentary vote. The 60-year-old Thavisin's victory in the parliamentary vote, with the support of two-thirds of the assembly, ends weeks of political uncertainty that followed an election held 100 days ago. Srettha Thavisin after completing his studies in 1986, embarked on his professional path, assuming the role of an assistant product manager at Procter & Gamble. This initial chapter of his career spanned a duration of four years, during which he gained valuable insights and experience. However, it was in the year 1988 that he embarked on a transformative journey, co-founding Sansiri. This enterprise would go on to establish itself as one of Thailand's foremost real estate development companies, leaving an indelible mark on the industry.

The Resilience of the Piripkura Tribe: Last Survivors Found Deep within the Amazon Rainforest

Deep within the heart of the Amazon rainforest lies an extraordinary tale – that of the Piripkura tribe. This story revolves around Tamandua Piripkura, one of the last remaining three survivors of this indigenous community. Their journey encapsulates the unyielding struggle of Indigenous people against the encroachment of the modern world. The Piripkura tribe is a secluded indigenous group found in Brazil. Known for their extreme isolation, they have deliberately avoided contact with mainstream society. Their commitment to maintaining their traditional way of life has spanned generations. The Piripkura territory is nestled in the Brazilian state of Mato Grosso, within the Amazon rainforest. Their land is a treasure trove of biodiversity, playing a critical role in the ecological balance of the region. The tribe's close connection with their natural habitat underscores their role as stewards of the forest.

African Swine Fever Spreads Globally: 49 Countries Affected Since 2021

Since its resurgence in January 2021, the highly contagious African Swine Fever (ASF) virus has rampantly spread across the globe, infiltrating 49 countries by August 2023. The virus, infamous for its nearly 100% fatality rate among domestic and wild pigs, has wrought havoc on pig populations, with over 1.5 million animals lost within this timeframe. The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), a prominent intergovernmental organization dedicated to combatting animal diseases, released a report detailing this alarming spread on August 21, 2023. Since January 2021, the highly contagious African Swine Fever (ASF) virus has spread to 49 countries by August 2023. This virus affects both domestic and wild pigs, causing nearly 100% mortality.

PM Modi first Indian prime minister to visit Greece in 40 years

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi embarked on a landmark visit to Greece, marking a significant diplomatic milestone as he became the first Indian Prime Minister to set foot in the country in 40 years. This visit is aimed at fortifying the bilateral relationship between India and Greece, and it comes at the invitation of Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. As Prime Minister Modi arrived in the Greek capital of Athens, he was warmly greeted by the Indian community residing in Greece. A symbolic gesture of cultural exchange was presented as they gifted him with a traditional Greek headdress, symbolizing the bridging of cultures and the strong ties that the two nations share. During his visit, Prime Minister Modi is set to engage in crucial talks with his Greek counterpart, Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis. The primary objective of these discussions is to further solidify the existing relationship between the two countries. The talks are expected to encompass a wide range of areas, including economic cooperation, defense collaboration, and people-to-people connections.

Iran Unveils Mohajer-10 Combat UAV, Claiming Extended Range, Payload

In a significant event attended by senior Iranian officials, the Islamic Republic recently introduced its latest achievement in unmanned aerial technology – the Mohajer-10 drone. As reported by state media, this cutting-edge unmanned aerial vehicle boasts an impressive range of 2,000 kilometers (1,240 miles). The unveiling of Mohajer-10 follows closely on the heels of another noteworthy display of Iran's unmanned systems. Merely a week prior, Tehran showcased an array of advanced drones at the Army 2023 defense expo held in Russia. Among these were the Arash, Ababil-5 Karrar, and Shahin combined-type UAVs.

PM Modi Pays Tribute to Tomb of the Unknown Soldier during Greece Visit

On his visit to Greece, Prime Minister Narendra Modi engaged in a solemn and symbolic act by paying his respects to the 'Tomb of the Unknown Soldier' in Athens. This gesture took place amidst a series of diplomatic activities during his European tour, highlighting India's commitment to global partnerships. Prior to his visit to Greece, Prime Minister Modi participated in the 15th BRICS Summit held in South Africa. This summit served as a platform for bilateral discussions with various world leaders, reinforcing India's diplomatic ties with these nations. Subsequently, Modi's journey took him to Greece, where he embarked on a schedule filled with diplomatic engagements. The 'Tomb of the Unknown Soldier,' situated at Syntagma Square in Athens, stands as a poignant tribute to Greek soldiers who sacrificed their lives in different conflicts. Located in front of the Old Royal Palace, this cenotaph carries deep historical significance.

Emmerson Mnangagwa Wins Second Term As President Of Zimbabwe

Emmerson Mnangagwa has been declared the winner of Zimbabwe's presidential election, securing a second term as the nation's leader. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

(ZEC) announced Mnangagwa as the victor with 52.6% of the vote, while his closest rival, Nelson Chamisa of the Citizens' Coalition for Change (CCC), trailed behind at 44%. This election marks a significant moment in Zimbabwe's political landscape, occurring six years after the fall of longtime ruler Robert Mugabe, who was ousted from power in a military coup. Born on 15 September 1942, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa is a prominent Zimbabwean politician who assumed the role of Zimbabwe's President on 24 November 2017. A dedicated member of (Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front) ZANU-PF and a close associate of former President Robert Mugabe, Mnangagwa occupied various key ministerial positions and served as Mugabe's Vice-President until November 2017. Taking the helm at the age of 80, Mnangagwa's ascendancy followed a 2017 military coup that deposed Zimbabwe's longstanding leader, Robert Mugabe, who had held authority since the country's independence in 1980. During the mid-1980s, Mnangagwa held responsibility for internal security. Mnangagwa was nicknamed as "The Crocodile," a creature renowned in Zimbabwean legend for its cunning and unyielding nature."

State News**Foxconn Signs ₹ 1,600 Crore Deal To Set Up Plant In Tamil Nadu**

Foxconn Technology Group, a prominent Taiwanese company and a key supplier to Apple Inc., has pledged to invest ₹1,600 crore in establishing a manufacturing facility in Kancheepuram district, Tamil Nadu. The commitment was made in the presence of Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and Foxconn Chairman Young Liu during Mr. Liu's first visit to the state. The investment is expected to create significant employment opportunities and boost the electronics manufacturing sector in Tamil Nadu. In addition to the investment commitment, Foxconn's Chairman Mr. Young Liu signed a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras and Guidance, the nodal agency instrumental in attracting investments to the state.

Bengali

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Odisha widens ambit of Social Security Scheme

Odisha Government expanded the coverage of Social Security Scheme to 50 more categories of unorganised workers which include delivery boys, boatmen and photographers, the scheme aims to provide financial assistance in case of accidental or natural death. The Odisha Government on 2nd August expanded the Social Security Scheme to cover 50 more categories of workers under the purview of Odisha Unorganised Worker's Social Security Board (OUWSSB). At present, only 10 categories of workers are covered under OUWSSB. In the first phase street vendors, small traders, domestic workers, rickshaw pullers, auto drivers, cobblers, agricultural workers, forest workers, newspaper hawkers and sanitation workers will be registered under the board, followed by tailors, saloon workers, labourers, railway potters, restaurant workers, vegetable vendors, band-party members, plantation workers, photographer and videographer, assistants in grocery shops, delivery boy and girls and meat sellers. The state government increased the amount for the families of deceased worker from Rs.2 lakh to Rs.4 lakh. Similarly, for natural deaths, the assistance amount has been enhanced from Rs.1 lakh to Rs.2 lakh.

Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma launches 'Amrit Brikshya Andolan' app

The Assam government has taken a significant step towards enhancing its forest cover and combating climate change by announcing a massive initiative called 'Amrit Brikshya Andolan'. This ambitious project aims to plant 1 crore saplings in a single day in September, marking a crucial milestone in the state's efforts to boost its green economy and contribute to the fight against global warming. The primary objective of this large-scale initiative is to significantly increase Assam's forest cover and encourage collective action in the face of climate change. On September 17, approximately 40 lakh members of women self-help groups from across the state will play a pivotal role by planting two commercially-viable saplings each, adding up to a total of 80 lakhs saplings.

Patna High Court ordered to resume Caste Based Survey in Bihar

The Patna High Court ordered to resume the caste based survey in Bihar, which was first started by Patna DM Chandrashekhar himself in Ward 10, Phulwarisharif, Patna. The Caste based survey has resumed in entire Bihar, following the order of the Patna High Court. This survey was first started by Patna District Magistrate Chandrashekhar in Ward 10, Phulwarisharif, Patna. There are 13 lakh 69 thousand families in Patna in which 9 lakh 35 thousand people have been surveyed and the survey of the remaining families will be done within a week. The court had stayed the caste survey on 4th May through an interim order, saying that the state government was not competent to conduct the survey. On Tuesday, the Patna High Court upheld the previous order to

carry on the survey across Bihar and dismissed several petition challenging the state government's decision. Bihar Government gets the green signal to carry on the survey. The survey was supposed to take place in two phases which was scheduled to end in May. The first round was completed in January this year in which the household counting exercise took place. The second round started on 15th April and was about to complete in May. In this round, the state was collecting data of people regarding their caste and socio-economic conditions.

GI tags for Goan mangoes and bebinca, crafts from Rajasthan and U.P

The Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai has recently granted Geographical Indication (GI) tags to seven products from different regions of India, including four traditional crafts from Rajasthan. The GI tags provide recognition and protection to these unique products, highlighting their distinctiveness and origin.

Jalesar Dhatu Shilp is an complex Metal Craft originating from the town of Jalesar in Uttar Pradesh's Etah district.

An enchanting Mango Variety from Goa, Goa Mankurad Mango, also referred to Goa Mancurad or Goa Alphonso is a delightful mango variety grown in Goa.

The Regal Dessert of Goa, Goan Bebinca, also known as Bibik or Bebinca, is a traditional dessert hailing from Goa.

The Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft from Rajasthan produces exquisite ornamented weapons.

Bikaner Kashidakari Craft offers exquisite needlework for special occasions. It is traditionally crafted on cotton, silk, or velvet and showcases fine stitches and mesmerizing mirror-work.

Bandhej, known as one of the most renowned textile art forms of Rajasthan, is the Rajasthani art of tying and dyeing.

The Bikaner Usta Kala Craft, also referred to as gold nakashi or gold manauti work for its enduring golden hue, showcases artistic camel hide craftsmanship. This unique art form entails treating raw camel hide and skillfully molding it into a range of products.

U.P. Cabinet approves Water Tourism and Adventure Sports Policy

Uttar Pradesh Cabinet approved a policy on 1st August with the aim of making state a 'water tourism and adventure sports destination'. The water tourism and adventure sport policy approved by the Uttar Pradesh Government on 1st August with the validation period of 10 years from the date notified by the government. The policy of water tourism and adventure policy will be applicable to all inland land-based, air based and water routes, dams, reservoirs, lakes, rivers and ponds, and all adventure activities to be carried out on various water bodies and land parcels within the jurisdiction of Uttar Pradesh. The nodal agency will create adventure sports units at the divisional level.

NABARD sanctions Rs 1974 crore to Rajasthan govt

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has sanctioned a total amount of Rs 1,974.07 crore to the Rajasthan government under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) for the financial year 2023-24.

This substantial funding aims to uplift the living conditions of rural communities and drive economic growth in the region.

A major portion of the sanctioned amount, Rs 930.44 crore, has been earmarked for three crucial rural drinking water supply projects. These projects will be implemented in the districts of Ajmer, Jalore, and Kota, with the objective of providing clean and potable water to households in 2,500 villages.

In an effort to enhance connectivity and transportation infrastructure, NABARD has sanctioned Rs 926.48 crore for the construction of 676 rural roads. These roads will primarily be developed in the desert and tribal areas of the state.

Prioritizing the healthcare needs of the rural population, NABARD has already allocated Rs 117.15 crore for the construction of 104 veterinary hospitals and 431 sub-centres. NABARD is also collaborating with the Rajasthan government to bring 4.28 lakh hectares of agricultural land under micro-irrigation.

Another crucial infrastructure development project supported by NABARD is the lining of 450 km of earthen canals in the districts of Kota and Bundi

TNPCB to Hold Public Hearing on Adani Kattupalli Port Expansion Amid Controversy

The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (TNPCB) is set to conduct a public hearing on the proposed expansion of Adani group's Kattupalli Port in Tiruvallur district. The project, which was initially scheduled for a hearing in January 2021 but was delayed due to COVID-19, has drawn strong opposition from environmentalists and opposition parties.

The expansion aims to transform the port into a multipurpose cargo facility with extensive reclamation, triggering concerns about its environmental impact on the Ennore-Pulicat backwaters and the Pulicat lake, one of India's largest brackish-water ecosystems. The Adani Group applied for environmental clearance in 2019 to expand the capacity of Kattupalli Port at an estimated cost of ₹53,031 crore. According to the "Proposed Revised Master Plan Development of Kattupalli Port," the expansion project entails various facilities, including transloading, backup, and independent port craft facilities, waste reception facilities, and conveyor systems. The port's area is proposed to be expanded from the current 330 acres to a vast 6,111 acres, with nearly 2,000 acres being reclaimed by dumping dredged sand into the sea.

Bihar to Constitute 'Rhino Task Force' for Reintroduction of Rhino Conservation Scheme

The Bihar government to constitute 'Rhino Task Force' for suggesting measures for the reintroduction of rhino conservation scheme in 'Valmiki Tiger Reserve' in West Champaran district. The state's wildlife authorities have observed a substantial increase in the tiger population in VTR, prompting them to focus on reviving the rhino population in the region. Currently, there is only one rhino in VTR and 14 in Patna Zoo, but with the establishment of the 'Rhino Task Force', the authorities aim to bring back more rhino to the reserve. The Valmiki Tiger Reserve has been selected as a potential site under the National Rhino Conservation Scheme, where rhino from other reserves across the country may be brought in. A committee was set up about two years back to assess the habitat and security conditions in VTR and to suggest measures for the reintroduction of rhinos.

Rajasthan Govt. announces 19 New Districts, 3 New Divisions in State

Rajasthan Government recently approved a proposal to form 19 new districts and three new divisions with the purpose of improving governance and decentralizing administrative functions. As of now, Rajasthan has 50 districts and 10 divisions, earlier it had 33 districts and 7 divisions. A high-level committee chaired by retired IAS officer Ram Lubhaya formed in March 2022 to give recommendations about the formation of new districts in Rajasthan. The committee submitted its report and based on the interim report of the committee, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, on 17 March, made an announcement of the formation of 19 new districts in the state. After the announcement of the formation of the new states, representations were received from people, public representatives and various organizations regarding the demarcation of the new district boundaries. The representations were forwarded to the committee for re-examining the boundaries of the proposed districts. After examining the representations, the committee submitted its report to the state government on 2nd August, which was approved in the Cabinet meeting on Friday.

Gujarat launches 'Sinh Suchna' app for tracking lions

To celebrate World Lion Day, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel of Gujarat introduced a new mobile application called 'Sinh Suchna'. The launch event, held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, signifies a significant step towards modern wildlife conservation, enabling both the state's forest department and the general public to effectively monitor lion movements. The 'Sinh Suchna' app empowers individuals to directly report lion sightings to the forest department. This innovative approach facilitates real-time tracking and swift conflict resolution. During the launch, CM Patel highlighted the app's importance in bolstering public involvement in wildlife conservation. In addition to the app, plans are underway for a new lion safari park near Naliya-Mandvi village in the Una taluka of the Gir-Somnath district. This initiative aims to alleviate the strain on the Gir National Park in Sasan-Gir, which has been facing increased tourist numbers.

Kerala Assembly Approves Resolution to Rename State as 'Keralam'

In a significant move aimed at embracing its cultural and linguistic heritage, the Kerala Legislative Assembly has passed a resolution requesting the Central government to change the name of the state from 'Kerala' to 'Keralam'. In Malayalam, the state was denoted as 'Keralam', but in alternative languages, it is called as 'Kerala'. The necessity to unite the Malayalam-speaking communities into a harmonious Kerala gained significant prominence during the period of India's fight for freedom. The term 'Keralam' traces its roots to the fusion of two Malayalam words – "Kera," symbolizing coconut, and "Alam" denoting land. Thus, 'Keralam' intricately encase the essence of the "Land of Coconut Trees" paying homage to the state's prolific coconut cultivation, a pivotal contributor amounting to about 45% of India's overall coconut harvest. The proposal involves a modification of the current nomenclature to 'Keralam,' a change that is sought to be instituted through the provisions of Article 3 of the Constitution. This alteration would encompass the adoption of 'Keralam' as the state's official name across all languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

CM Solar Mission launched in power deficit Meghalaya

In a significant step towards harnessing renewable energy and reducing power deficits, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma launched the Chief Minister's Solar Mission, a pioneering initiative aimed at ushering in a new era of green progress for the north eastern hill state. The mission, backed by an investment of Rs 500 crore from the government over the next five years, is set to transform the state's energy landscape and contribute to its sustainable development. The state government has allocated an annual investment of Rs 100 crore to kickstart the solar mission. Additionally, plans are underway to attract diverse funding partners, including contributions from corporate social responsibility, carbon credits, and international organizations sharing the vision of sustainable energy. This aggressive expansion plan is set to be supported by net metering, which will allow higher capacity hybrid solar units to feed energy into both local and national grids. The subsidy structure is designed to encourage a broad range of beneficiaries, with individual households eligible for a 70% subsidy and schools, hospitals, hotels, and commercial entities qualifying for a 50% subsidy.

Uttar Pradesh Records Maximum Cases Of Cancer

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research Cancer Registry data, Uttar Pradesh, registered the highest count of cancer cases in India. During the year 2022, the state documented an astonishing 210,000 new cases, marking a significant uptick from the 201,000 cases registered in 2020. The state of Uttar Pradesh also logged the highest count of fatalities linked to cancer, with a remarkable 116,818 individuals succumbing to this formidable ailment. The mortality rate in Uttar Pradesh was on par with the national average, while Maharashtra ranked second in terms of fatalities. Experts suggest that these figures likely

underestimate the true trend, given that only 15 states mandate reporting of cancer as a notifiable disease. Notably absent from this list is Uttar Pradesh, which carries the highest burden of both cases and deaths.

In a First In India, Goa To Give Free IVF Treatment In Govt Hospital

In a significant stride towards accessible and affordable healthcare, Goa has emerged as the trailblazer among Indian states by introducing free In vitro fertilization (IVF) treatment. This groundbreaking initiative, coupled with assisted reproductive technology (ART) and intrauterine insemination (IUI), was officially inaugurated by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant at the Goa Medical College (GMC) in Bambolim. With this momentous development, Goa establishes itself as a trailblazer in healthcare services. Goa Medical College's super-speciality block is now equipped to offer IVF treatment, responding to the needs of the community with compassion and innovation. Approximately 100 hopeful parents have already registered with GMC, eager to avail the IVF facility. In India, the cost of IVF treatment has often been a significant deterrent for couples seeking fertility solutions. Depending on the hospital and the complexity of the IVF procedure, the expenses can range from Rs 70,000 to Rs 3 lakh per cycle. The financial burden often leaves many individuals and families grappling with limited options. The Goa government's decision to offer free IVF treatment directly addresses this pressing concern, easing the financial strain on couples and expanding access to reproductive healthcare.

TN CM Stalin Lays Foundation Stone For South-East Asia's Largest Desalination Plant

In a significant stride towards resolving the water crisis gripping Chennai city, Tamil Nadu's Chief Minister, M K Stalin, has laid the foundation stone for what is set to become South East Asia's largest water desalination project. Spearheaded by VA Tech Wabag, a renowned pure-play water technology Indian Multinational Group based in Chennai, this project is poised to revolutionize the region's water supply. With an ambitious investment of Rs 4,400 crore, this initiative holds the potential to alleviate Chennai's water scarcity concerns and elevate the city's status as a water-sustainable urban center. The goal of the project is to establish a Seawater reverse osmosis (SWRO) desalination facility with the capacity to generate an impressive 400 million liters per day (MLD) of clean, drinkable water. The financial backing for this project is being extended by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), exemplifying a collaborative endeavor aimed at tackling a critical regional concern. This undertaking not only enhances Chennai's water security by establishing a dependable source of potable water through desalination but also has the potential to bestow upon the city the prestigious designation of the "Desalination Capital of India". The combined production of desalinated water along the Chennai coastline is projected to approach an astounding 750 MLD, presenting a remarkable achievement that could potentially reshape Chennai's water dynamics.

Onam 2023: History, Significance and Celebrations of Kerala's Harvesting Festival

The enchanting festivities of Onam, a significant cultural celebration in the state of Kerala, have graced the calendar from August 20 to August 31 this year. Stretching over a span of ten days, the Thiru-Onam or Thiruvonam celebrations carry an air of excitement and exuberance as they commemorate the return of the revered King Mahabali, also known as Maveli. This vibrant festival is an emblem of Kerala's rich heritage and cultural splendor. Each day of Onam is imbued with its own unique significance, contributing to the grand tapestry of this festive period. The sequence of days – Atham, Chithira, Chodi, Vishakam, Anizham, Thriketta, Moolam, Pooradam, Uthradom, and finally, Thiruvonam – is carefully woven into the cultural fabric of the event. These days hold rituals, traditions, and festivities that resonate with the hearts of the people.

Kerala's First AI School Launched In Thiruvananthapuram

The state of Kerala introduces its first AI school situated at Santhigiri Vidyabhavan in Thiruvananthapuram. It was inaugurated by the Former President of India, Ram Nath Kovind. This inaugural ceremony heralded the inception of a fresh era in the educational domain, distinguished by innovative technology and forward-looking pedagogical methods. This initiative is the brainchild of a collaboration between iLearning Engines (ILE) USA, a renowned educational platform, and Vedhik eSchool, steered by a committee of distinguished professionals including former Chief Secretaries, DGPs, and Vice Chancellors. The AI School, meticulously crafted by the iLearning Engines and Vedhik eSchool partnership, emerges as a beacon of innovative learning. Rooted in artificial intelligence technology, it promises an unparalleled educational experience for students, fortified by international standards and an unwavering commitment to quality learning. This revolutionary approach ensures that the benefits of school studies transcend classroom hours, extending to the virtual realm through the school's website.

Telangana Partners With UNESCO To Implement Recommendation On Ethics Of AI

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Information Technology, Electronics and Communications (ITE&C) Department of the Government of Telangana have forged a pioneering partnership to infuse the Ethics of AI into the very essence of artificial intelligence systems. This partnership is designed to cultivate a profound impact on how AI is developed and utilized, ensuring that the benefits are shared across all segments of society. The collaboration encompasses multiple dimensions, including-

Ethical Development and Use of AI, Awareness Raising, Capacity Building, Contributions to UNESCO's Global Observatory on AI Ethics.

The partnership between UNESCO and the Telangana Government is a pledge to intertwine technology with the fundamental principles that safeguard human rights and dignity. By synergizing diverse strengths and viewpoints, this collaboration envisions harnessing the potential of AI for the collective good, creating a future that knows no boundaries and resonates with equity and inclusivity.

NHA Launches First ABDM Microsite In Mizoram

Under the "100 Microsites" initiative, the National Health Authority (NHA) of India has unveiled the first Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) Microsite in the capital city of Mizoram. This achievement is poised to transform the healthcare sector by propelling the advantages of digitalization to the forefront. The ABDM Microsite project represents a pivotal shift in healthcare digitization efforts across India. The concept revolves around establishing defined geographical regions where targeted outreach efforts are concentrated to onboard small and medium-scale private healthcare providers into the digital healthcare ecosystem. With a robust support framework in place, these providers will play a vital role in offering digital health services to patients. The project's origin can be traced to the vision of providing a significant push to healthcare digitization, reaching even the smallest healthcare facilities across the country.

Assam Govt Issues Notification Banning Plastic Water Bottles Below 1 Litre

In a decisive move towards environmental conservation, the Assam Environment and Forest Department has taken a significant step by announcing the ban on the use and production of plastic water bottles below 1000 ml capacity within the state. This transformative initiative, set to be enforced from October 2 this year, reflects Assam's commitment to combat plastic pollution and promote sustainable practices. Recognizing the environmental hazards posed by such smaller plastic bottles, the Assam government's decision aligns with its commitment to safeguard the state's natural beauty and biodiversity. Last month, the Assam government made headlines by declaring its intent to prohibit the production and use of drinking water bottles made from Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) with a volume of less than 1 litre. This commendable decision has now materialized into official action, with the Assam Environment and Forest Department issuing a resolute notification on August 23. The notification effectively puts an end to the manufacturing, import, stocking, distribution, and sale of plastic water bottles below the specified capacity.

Assam Cabinet Creates 4 New Districts, 81 Sub-Districts After Delimitation

In a significant move aimed at enhancing decentralization of governance and improving the convergence of line departments, the Assam cabinet has taken a bold step by creating four new districts that were previously abolished last year in December. With the addition of these new districts, Assam's total district count will reach 35. The decision comes in line with the ongoing delimitation process that has been initiated after the Election Commission's (EC) decision to redefine Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies in Assam as per Section 8A of the RP Act, 1950. The newly formed districts are Hojai, Biswanath, Tamulpur, and Bajali.

West Bengal News**Prime Minister launches Amrit Bharat Station Scheme in West Bengal's 37 railway stations**

On Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS) via video link to initiate the rejuvenation of 37 railway stations across the country. The Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS) aims to transform and revitalize 1,309 railway stations across the nation, enhancing the overall passenger experience and making them world-class travel hubs. As part of this initiative, work on 508 stations in various States commenced, with an investment of ₹25,000 crore. In the State, 37 railway stations will receive a modern makeover with an investment of ₹1,503 crore.

The railway stations selected for the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme are Barrackpore, Chandpara, Dalgaon, Falakata, New Alipurduar, Andal Junction, Asansol Junction, Barddhaman, Katwa Junction, Pandabeshwar, Bolpur Shantiniketan, Rampurhat Junction, Dinhata, Aluabari Road, Dalkhola, Kaliyaganj, Ambika Kalna, Sheoraphuli Junction, Tarakeshwar, Binnaguri, Dhupguri, Haldibari, Hasimara, Jalpaiguri, Jalpaiguri Road, Kamakhyaguri, New Mal Junction, Sealdah, Malda town, Samsi, Azimganj, Berhampore Court, New Farakka Junction, Bethuadahari, Krishnanagar City Junction, Nabadwip Dham and Shantipur.

22Se Shravan 1430 marks the death anniversary of the great poet Rabindranath.

22nd Shravan is being observed across the country as Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore's death anniversary. He was a Bengali poet, novelist, musician, painter and dramatist who significantly changed Bengali literature and music. He died on 22nd Shravan 1348 bangabo which is 7th August 1941 as per English date. This year i.e. 22Se Shravan 1430 marks the 82nd death anniversary of Kabiguru. Kabiguru is remembered with respect on his 82nd death anniversary. Rabindranath Tagore was born on May 7, 1861 in Jorasanko, Calcutta. Incidentally he composed more than 2,000 songs which created a separate genre in Bengali music, known as "Songs of Tagore". His collection of poems, Gitanjali, created a paradigm shift in Bengali literature, while his songs did the same for Bengali music. He wrote eight novels, 84 short stories and numerous poems in a literary career spanning nearly seven decades. Notable among his compositions are Gitanjali, Gora and Garhe-Bayre.

The state education department is going to make it mandatory for government teachers to go to villages to teach by bringing changes in the education policy

The state government is thinking of implementing new rules for state government school teachers. According to this rule, teachers have to go and teach in villages for five years or a fixed period of their working life. This rule may be introduced in West Bengal very soon. The state government has proposed such changes in the education policy of the state. The new education policy of the state was approved in the state cabinet meeting on Monday. The state government has thought to keep the teacher-pupil ratio right. As mentioned in the draft education policy of the state, as in the case of doctors it is mandatory to go to the villages for treatment, similarly the teachers have to teach in the rural areas. The state government will decide on this at the time of teacher recruitment. On the other hand, the government wants to give more importance to Bengali language. English language is also given importance. According to the new education policy, Bengali and English must be read compulsorily by the students. Besides, Bengali, Hindi and Sanskrit as third languages have been given importance in the proposed new education policy of the state. Bengali should be taught from class I to class XII. Curriculum should be developed accordingly. Incidentally, the National Education Policy has said that the 10th class examination will be cancelled. However, the decision to hold the secondary examination has been made in the education policy of the state.

Bankura's Mecha Sandesh is about to get the GI tag

Mecha sandesh is one of the famous things of district Bankura. Note that mecha sandesh is made without milk and fresh, unripened curd cheese. Bankura's Mecha Sandesh is made without milk and chickpeas incomparable in taste. The famous Mecha Sandesh of Bankura's Beliatore is going to get the GI tag now. About 20 families here are involved in making this mecha sandesh. People of Bankura are very happy with the news of getting this GI tag, they said.

Padma Bhushan nuclear scientist Bikas Singh passed away this morning

The eminent nuclear scientist Vikas Singh passed away in a private hospital in Kolkata on Friday morning. He was 78 years old at the time of his death. According to family sources, he was suffering from physical problems for a long time. Over the past few days, his illness worsened and he was admitted to the hospital. There his physical condition further deteriorated. The entire country was shocked by the death of this senior scientist. It is to be noted that this Bengali nuclear scientist was working at the 'Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre'. He has made several significant contributions to atomic research. He was awarded 'Padma Bhushan' in 2010. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee expressed grief over his death. Incidentally, he was a member of the royal family of Murshidabad. His father Bimalchandra Singh was a former minister of the state. He was born in 1945 in Kandi, Murshidabad. From childhood, he had an inexhaustible attraction towards science. He studied Physics from Presidency College. He graduated from the respective college in 1964. He then traveled abroad for higher education.

The self sacrifice anniversary of brave martyr Khudiram Bose is being celebrated across the state

Khudiram Bose was a brave young man who sacrificed himself in India's freedom struggle. His sacrifice left an indelible mark on the freedom struggle. On 11th August 1908, at the age of 18, Khudiram Bose was hanged. Incidentally, he was the youngest revolutionary of the Indian freedom struggle who was martyred on the gallows. On December 3, 1889, Khudiram Bose was born in Maubani village, Bengal. It is noted that one of the most defining moments of Khudiram Bose's life was the Muzaffarpur bombing. In April 1908, at the age of 18, Khudiram and his accomplice Prafulla Chaki attempted to assassinate District Judge Kingsford of Muzaffarpur. who was known for his harsh treatment of Indian nationalists. Hoping to strike against the tyrannical colonial administration, the duo hurled a bomb at his car in Muzaffarpur. Unfortunately, they died as two British women replaced Kingsford in the car. Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki escaped after the bombing but were eventually caught by the British authorities. He was caught by the British authorities after the Muzaffarpur bomb attack. He died at the age of 18 for refusing to divulge any information about his collaborators. Khudiram Bose was hanged on 11 August 1908. As he stood on the brink of his last moments, his tenacity and conviction served as an inspiration to countless Indians, fueling the dream of an independent India.

President Launches 'My Bengal, Addiction-Free Bengal' Campaign In Kolkata

At an occasion held at the Raj Bhavan, President Droupadi Murmu launched the 'My Bengal, Addiction-Free Bengal' campaign, a vital undertaking organised by the Brahma Kumaris, aimed at tackling the prevalent issue of drug usage among the youth. Acknowledging the joint endeavors of both the central and state governments in confronting this concern, the president underscored the pressing need to urgently discover viable solutions to eradicate this threat from society. President Droupadi Murmu outlined a multi-faceted approach to tackling the issue of drug abuse, advocating for solutions that involve spiritual awakening, medical intervention, social unity, and determined political will. She emphasized that addiction often stems from mental stress and peer pressure, resulting in harmful consequences for both the individuals involved and their families. She also applauded organizations such as the Brahma Kumaris for engaging in discussions around these critical matters and actively working to find resolutions. The event was graced by the presence of West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose and state minister for women and child development and social welfare Shashi Panja. President Murmu extended her appreciation to Prajapita Brahmakumari Ishwariya Vishwavidyalaya for launching the 'My Bengal, Addiction Free Bengal' initiative as part of the 'Nasha Mukt Bharat Abhiyan'.

The proposal to specify the state anthem of West Bengal has been adopted

Recently, a proposal to specify a 'State Anthem' for West Bengal is also going to be taken up in the State Assembly. A song with which the people of Bengal have a spiritual connection, is being thought of as 'Rajya Sangeet'. Several songs have already been discussed and a list of them is being prepared, sources in the assembly said. Note that the national anthem of India is Jana-Gana-Mana. Similarly, it is known that the idea of state anthem is going on along with the national anthem. Basically, any music that has a spiritual connection with the local people, with whom the people of the state can unite, is accepted as state music. This time in the case of West Bengal, such thinking is being done. Incidentally, different states of the country have such patterns of state music. Neighboring Assam, Bihar, Odisha also have their own state music. For example, 'Bande Utkal Janani' has been adopted as the state anthem of Odisha in 2020. Again in 2012, 'Mere Bharat Ke Kanthahar' was adopted as the State Anthem of Bihar. Again the state anthem of Assam is 'O Mur Apunar Desh'.

Kolkata Becomes 3rd Indian City To Get Air Quality Early Warning System

The Indian city of Kolkata has taken a significant step forward by adopting an Air Quality Early Warning System (AQEWS), developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) based in Pune. This system offers both real-time air pollution data and forecasts, with the objective of enhancing readiness and facilitating measures to tackle the escalating air pollution levels within the city. The AQEWS in Kolkata comes equipped with an intricate network of sensors that monitor the air quality index (AQI) in real-time. This AQI is a standardized metric used to assess the level of air pollution in a specific area, with values ranging from 0 to 500. A higher AQI indicates more polluted air and an increased health concern. The AQEWS provides this data by analyzing the concentration of pollutants like PM2.5 (particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller), which has been identified as a major contributor to health problems due to its ability to penetrate deep into the lungs.



Economy News

Fiscal Deficit in India Touches 25.3% of Full-Year Target at the End of June 2023: CGA Data

The fiscal deficit of the Indian government has reached 25.3% of the full-year target at the end of June 2023, as per data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA). This article provides an overview of the fiscal deficit situation in India, comparing it to previous years and the government's projected targets for the current financial year (2023-24). Fiscal deficit is the gap between the government's total expenditure and revenue. It indicates the extent to which the government needs to borrow to meet its expenses. A high fiscal deficit can have implications on inflation, interest rates, and overall economic stability.

India's Core Sector Records 8.2% Growth in June, Highest in Five Months

India's eight core infrastructure sectors have shown a notable growth rate of 8.2% in June, marking the highest in five months, according to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry's latest data released on July 31. These core sectors, including coal, crude oil, steel, cement, electricity, fertilizers, refinery products, and natural gas, play a crucial role in the country's industrial production. The core sector growth for May has been revised upwards to 5.0% from the initial 4.3%. In comparison to June 2022, which recorded a growth rate of 13.1%, the current growth is lower due to a favorable base effect. However, the cumulative core sector growth for the first quarter (April-June) of 2022-23 stands at 5.8%, which has declined from the robust 13.9% recorded in the preceding three months.

India and Malaysia can now trade in Indian rupee

The Ministry of External Affairs declared that trade between India and Malaysia can now be conducted using the Indian Rupee (INR) as a mode of settlement, in addition to other currencies. This announcement follows the launch of the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023 by the Ministry of Commerce the day before, which reaffirmed the government's determination to establish the rupee as a global currency. This move is expected to boost bilateral trade between the two countries and reduce transaction costs for businesses.

Govt debt stands at ₹155.6 Lakh Crore in March 2023

In March 2023, the Indian government's debt stood at ₹155.6 lakh crore, accounting for 57.1% of the country's GDP. This represents a reduction from 61.5% of GDP in 2020-21, indicating efforts to manage debt levels. The government has also implemented various schemes to promote capital expenditure, economic growth, and welfare at both macro and micro levels. Additionally, a roadmap has been set in place to

achieve the ambitious goal of making India a \$5 trillion economy, involving digital economy promotion, technology-enabled development, energy transition, and more. As of March 31, 2023, the central government's debt amounted to ₹155.6 lakh crore, which represents 57.1% of the GDP. This debt-to-GDP ratio has reduced from 61.5% in 2020-21, indicating efforts to manage fiscal deficits and control debt accumulation. The debt of state governments is estimated to be around 28% of GDP at the end of the fiscal year 2022-23.

GST Council sticks to its plan to collect 28% tax on online gaming

The 51st meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council has decided to impose a 28% tax on the full face value of bets placed on online gaming, which will be implemented from 1st October. While some states, including Delhi, opposed the levy of the 28% tax on online gaming, others like Goa and Sikkim expressed their preference for taxing the Gross Gaming Revenue (GGR) rather than the face value of bets. On the other hand, states like Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh supported the decision taken at the last GST Council meeting for the implementation of the new levy. The Finance Minister of India, Nirmala Sitharaman, announced that the 28% GST on online gaming will take effect from 1st October. The decision aims to provide clarity on the taxation of supplies in casinos, horse racing, and online gaming. The council recommended amendments in the CGST Act 2017 and IGST Act 2017 to facilitate this implementation. Additionally, a specific provision in the IGST Act, 2017 will be inserted to address the liability to pay GST on the supply of online money gaming from suppliers located outside India to individuals within India.

China's Economy Slips into Deflation: Implications and Countermeasures

Deflation, the inverse of inflation, signifies a persistent decline in the general price levels of goods and services within an economy. The recent occurrence of deflation in China, the world's second-largest economy, has triggered concerns about its economic prospects and the need for robust policy responses from Beijing. Deflation can be succinctly described as a continuous reduction in overall price levels across an economy. This situation contrasts with inflation, where prices increase over time. In China's case, both the consumer price index (CPI) and producer price index (PPI) reported declines in July. Deflation can stem from multiple factors, such as reduced consumer demand, an oversupply of goods, technological innovations that lower production costs, or stringent monetary policies by central banks. In China's context, the primary drivers of deflation are diminished consumer demand and an economic slowdown.

India's Per Capita Income Projected to Soar 7.5 Times by 2047, SBI Research Study Finds

India's journey towards becoming a developed economy by 2047 has gained momentum, with a recent study conducted by SBI Research economists projecting a remarkable increase in per capita income. The study suggests that India's per capita income is poised to surge by 7.5 times, from Rs 2 lakh (\$2,500) in FY23 to Rs 14.9 lakh (\$12,400) per annum by FY47. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emphasized this objective, aiming to turn the vision of a developed India into a reality by 2047. The study by SBI Research underscores the immense growth potential in India's economy in the coming decades. This growth is attributed to several factors, including the country's transition from a lower-income group to an upper-income group economy and the positive impact of tax buoyancy. Notably, the formalization of the economy through initiatives like the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the UDYAM portal for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) has played a pivotal role in enhancing income tax returns.

Retail Inflation Surges to 15-Month High of 7.44% in July

In July, retail inflation in India experienced a significant upswing, reaching 7.44%, marking the highest rate since April 2022. This surge contrasts with the preceding four-month period of inflation below the central bank's 6% tolerance threshold. The increase is largely attributed to an 11.5% spike in food prices, making it the first time since September 2022 that the price rise has crossed the 7% mark. The primary driver of the July inflation surge was an impressive 11.5% increase in food prices, causing a ripple effect on the overall inflation rate. Notably, vegetable prices surged by a staggering 37.3%, while cereals and pulses became over 13% more expensive. Consequently, urban consumers saw their food bills rise by over 12.3%, while rural consumers experienced an 11% increase in food inflation. On the whole, rural residents faced a slightly higher overall inflation rate of 7.63% for the same period. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose by 2.9% from the previous month, reflecting the swift inflationary pressures. The month-on-month increase in food prices was notable as well, with a 6.7% upsurge. These figures surpassed the expectations of most economists.

Crisil Forecasts 6% GDP Growth for India in FY24

Crisil, a prominent rating agency, anticipates India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth to reach 6% in the fiscal year 2024. This projection is lower than the 7% estimated by the National Statistical Organisation (NSO) for the fiscal year 2023. Crisil offers an optimistic medium-term outlook for the Indian economy. The agency foresees the economy maintaining an average growth rate of 6.8% over the next five fiscal years. This projection is driven by factors such as increased capital investment and productivity enhancements.

ICRA Forecasts India's GDP Growth of 8.5% in Q1, 2023

ICRA Ratings recently released a comprehensive report projecting a robust economic growth for India in the first quarter of the fiscal year 2023 (FY24). The report suggests that the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is expected to accelerate to 8.5% during the April-June period, a

significant increase from the 6.1% growth rate witnessed in the preceding quarter (January-March). This projected growth is attributed to multiple factors, including a supportive base effect and a notable recovery in the services sector.

The projected growth of 8.5% for Q1 FY24 is primarily attributed to two key factors:

Supportive Base Effect: The growth rate is expected to receive a boost from a supportive base effect, meaning that the comparison is made against a lower growth rate in the same period of the previous year.

Services Sector Recovery: The services sector, a significant contributor to India's economy, is anticipated to exhibit a noteworthy recovery. The report indicates that a continued catch-up in services demand and improved investment activity have positively impacted growth.

Rankings & Reports News

Reliance jumps 16 places, now at number 88 on Fortune Global 500 list

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries has maintained its highest ranking among Indian corporates in the latest Fortune Global 500 list, jumping 16 places to rank at number 88. Reliance was ranked at number 104 in the 2022 ranking and in the 2023 ranking it is placed at number 88, according to the publication. The company has gained a whopping 67 places in the last two years from number 155 in 2021. As many as eight Indian companies feature in this year's Fortune Global 500 ranking. State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) jumped 48 places to rank at number 94. Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) slipped nine places to rank at 107. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (number 158), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (number 233), and State Bank of India (number 235) were the other state-owned firms on the list.

World rice price index jumps to near 12-year high in July: FAO report

As reported by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the FAO All Rice Price Index witnessed a 2.8 percent escalation in July compared to the preceding month, with an average value of 129.7 points. This reflects an approximate 20 percent surge from the same period in the previous year and marks the most elevated level observed since September 2011. The escalation in rice prices is being propelled by various factors, including: Robust rice demand is among the key drivers behind the increasing rice prices. An additional factor is India's recent decision to limit exports, causing a reduction in the global rice supply. Unpredictable weather patterns in certain rice-producing nations have resulted in diminished yields, exacerbating the supply shortage. The escalating cost of rice is poised to exert a substantial influence on food security across numerous nations. Rice stands as a fundamental dietary item for millions of individuals worldwide, and the elevated prices could create challenges in affording this vital nourishment.

India ranks 6th in South Asia region for Internet Resilience

India, a rapidly developing nation in the realm of technology and connectivity, has achieved an overall score of 43 percent in the Internet Resilience Index (IRI). This achievement positions India as the sixth-ranked country in the South Asian region. The IRI, developed by the global non-profit organization Internet Society, provides a comprehensive assessment of a country's internet ecosystem, taking into account factors such as security, performance, infrastructure, and market readiness. The country's security ranking has been deemed above average, largely attributed to its exceptional adoption of the latest Internet Protocol, IPv6. As the world grapples with the expansion of networks and the depletion of IPv4 addresses, India has taken a leading stance by embracing IPv6, which supports the ever-growing demand for internet-connected devices. While India's commendable internet resilience is noteworthy, several neighboring countries have exceeded it in the IRI ranking. Within the South Asian region, countries like Bhutan (58 percent), Bangladesh (51 percent), Maldives (50 percent), Sri Lanka (47 percent), and Nepal (43 percent) have achieved higher positions. These rankings offer valuable insights into the region's advancement and highlight areas where India has the potential to enhance its internet resilience.

Rank	Country	Internet Resilience Index (IRI) Ranking
1	Bhutan	58 percent
2	Bangladesh	51 percent
3	Maldives	50 percent
4	Sri Lanka	47 percent
5	Nepal	43 percent

Srinagar Tops JJM Implementation Among Har Ghar Jal Certified Districts

The Srinagar district has become the highest-performing district under the Jal Jeevan Survekshan (JJS-2023), outshining 114 Har Ghar Jal certified villages across India. This remarkable recognition solidifies Srinagar's commitment to the successful implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), a visionary initiative aimed at ensuring universal access to clean and safe drinking water. The Jal Jeevan Mission, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 15, 2019, represents a monumental step towards securing water access for every rural household in India. The mission's ambitious goal of providing adequate quantities of clean, safe, and pressurized drinking water on a consistent basis is a testament to the government's dedication to improving the lives of millions.

Bihar, UP, TN top 3 states with maximum Jan Dhan beneficiaries

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) has emerged as a significant tool in driving financial inclusion and empowering individuals across India. As per the statistics provided by the Finance Ministry for the fiscal year 2022-23, a total of 6.23 crore Jan Dhan accounts were initiated as part of this initiative. The core aim of the "Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) is to ensure equitable access to a range of financial services, including the availability of fundamental savings accounts, access to customized credit, seamless remittance capabilities, insurance coverage, and pension benefits for underserved segments, notably weaker sections and low-income groups. Key aspects of PMJDY encompass a Rs. 5,000 overdraft provision for accounts linked to Aadhar, along with a RuPay debit card offering accident insurance coverage of up to Rs. 1 lakh. Furthermore, accounts opened between August 15, 2014, and January 26, 2015, are eligible for a Rupees 30,000 Life Insurance benefit for qualified beneficiaries.

Swachh Vayu Sarvekshan-2023: Madhya Pradesh's IT Hub Indore Secures First Rank

The city of Indore has clinched the top spot in the Swachh Vayu Sarvekshan -2023 conducted by the Central Pollution Control Board, in the category of cities with a population exceeding 10 lakhs. The results of the survey reflect not only the city's dedicated efforts but also highlight the overall progress made by several cities in Madhya Pradesh. The Swachh Vayu Sarvekshan -2023 witnessed a remarkable display of dominance by Madhya Pradesh, particularly in the category of cities with a population of more than 10 lakhs. Out of the top five positions, two were secured by cities from the state. While Indore claimed the prestigious first position, Bhopal secured a commendable fifth rank. This achievement reinforces Madhya Pradesh's proactive approach to tackling pollution and promoting cleaner air quality.

Indore's remarkable performance was underpinned by its impressive score of 187 out of 200, a testament to its robust and comprehensive measures for environmental preservation. Bhopal secured a respectable fifth position with a score of 181, while Jabalpur and Gwalior secured the 13th and 41st positions with scores of 172 and 114, respectively. These rankings mirror the concerted efforts undertaken by these cities to combat pollution and enhance their environmental footprint.

Below are the top five positions among cities with a population exceeding 10 lakhs:

Rank	Population Category	City
1st	> 10 lakhs	Indore
2nd	> 10 lakhs	Agra
3rd	> 10 lakhs	Thane
4th	> 10 lakhs	Srinagar
5th	> 10 lakhs	Bhopal

Indore Named Best City and Madhya Pradesh Best State in India Smart Cities Awards 2022

The India Smart Cities Awards 2022, organized by the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry, have recognized Indore as the best city and Madhya Pradesh as the best state in the Smart Cities Mission. The awards celebrate the progress and achievements of cities and states in promoting sustainable development and enhancing the quality of urban life across India. Best City Award: Indore has been named the best city in the India Smart Cities Awards 2022. The city has a remarkable track record, being consistently ranked as the cleanest city in the Swachh Bharat Mission for six consecutive years. Best State Award: Madhya Pradesh has been recognized as the best state in the Smart Cities Mission. The state has shown significant commitment to urban development through the implementation of multi-sectoral projects aimed at improving citizens' quality of life. Second Best City: Surat secured the second position among the smart cities for its notable efforts in urban development. Third Best City: Agra claimed the third spot for its initiatives contributing to the Smart Cities Mission. Award Categories and Winning Projects are Built Environment Category, Economy Category, Mobility Category, Governance Category, Union Territory Category.

Business News

Steel Minister unveils new logo of NMDC

In a special event in New Delhi, Jyotiraditya Scindia, the Union Minister of Steel and Civil Aviation, revealed the new logo of NMDC. The launch of new logo is a big step for NMDC, showing its commitment to responsible mining and global standards. The new logo is a perfect blend of modern style and meaningful symbolism. This new logo represents more than just a visual change, it represents the essence of NMDC's role as a leader in India's sustainable path. Embracing the elements of nature, NMDC now stands committed to creating a world in a responsible and harmonious manner. The new logo represents past achievements, present commitment and future aspirations of NMDC. It represents the scale and strength of the company's future, driven by innovation and sustainability. The new logo unveiled by Union Minister of Steel and Civil Aviation, signifies the company's future scale and strength after achieving a record production of 40 million tonnes for two consecutive fiscals.

SEBI Shortens IPO Listing Timeline to 3 Days Post Closure for Investor and Issuer Benefit

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has taken a significant step to enhance the efficiency of Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) by halving the timeline for listing shares on stock exchanges after the IPO closure. This move aims to provide substantial benefits to both investors and issuers in the capital markets. SEBI's new directive entails a reduced listing timeline for shares. This adjustment, designed to

expedite the listing process, will initially be introduced as a voluntary option for public issues commencing on or after September 1. However, it will become a mandatory requirement for all issues starting from December 1, 2023, onwards, as per the circular issued by the capital markets regulator. Under the revised guidelines, IPOs will now be mandated to list within three working days (T+3 days) after the closure of the IPO, in contrast to the previous requirement of six working days (T+6 days). The 'T' symbolizes the issue closing date, which serves as the starting point for the new timeline. This new listing timeframe will need to be explicitly disclosed in the offer documents of public issues, as highlighted by SEBI.

NCLT Approves \$10 Billion Mega-Merger Between Zee and Sony

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has given the green light to the merger between India's prominent entertainment company, Zee Entertainment Enterprises, and Culver Max Entertainment (formerly known as Sony Pictures Networks India or SPNI). The favorable verdict paves the way for an exciting phase of integration and transformation in the Indian entertainment industry. (Securities and Exchange Board of India) SEBI is expected to deliver its final decision on the matter on 14th of August. The decision was handed down by the panel led by Justice HV Subba Rao alongside member Madhu Sinha. With this approval in hand, Zee Entertainment Enterprises and Culver Max Entertainment are ready to kickstart the integration process in the upcoming week. A crucial step in this journey involves ZEE filing with the registrar of companies within a 30-day window. While an official timeline for completion has yet to be announced, seasoned mergers and acquisitions experts anticipate a potential conclusion around mid-November.

Employee Stock Option Plan (ESOP): Empowering Employees and Driving Growth

In today's competitive business landscape, attracting and retaining top talent has become a strategic priority for organizations. As a result, companies are constantly seeking innovative ways to motivate and engage their employees. One such method that has gained significant popularity is the Employee Stock Option Plan (ESOP). An ESOP is a powerful tool that not only rewards employees but also aligns their interests with the company's success. An Employee Stock Option Plan (ESOP) is a compensation scheme that grants employees the option to purchase company shares at a predetermined price within a specified time frame. These options are typically tied to the company's performance and are aimed at fostering a sense of ownership and accountability among employees. ESOPs are commonly used by startups, established firms, and even publicly traded companies to incentivize employees and foster a culture of shared success.

NPCI Launches UPI Chalega 3.0 Campaign to Drive UPI Adoption and Safety Awareness

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has introduced the third edition of its UPI Safety Awareness Campaign named "UPI Chalega." Collaborating with key stakeholders in the payments ecosystem, the campaign aims to emphasize the ease, safety, and swiftness of using the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) for transactions. The "UPI Chalega" campaign is geared towards promoting UPI as a trustworthy, efficient, and real-time payment method for a diverse range of transactions. It also sheds light on innovative features like UPI LITE, designed for swift low-value transactions, UPI AUTOPAY, facilitating secure recurring payments across UPI applications, and UPI Interoperability, which ensures seamless money transfers between all UPI-enabled apps. This isn't the first time the UPI Chalega campaign has been launched. In 2020, it was initiated under the guidance of the Financial Literacy Advisory Committee (FLAC). The success of the first and second editions played a pivotal role in expanding UPI's reach, fostering awareness about its safety measures, and enhancing its usability for diverse transactions, firmly establishing it as a preferred choice for digital payments.

Viacom18 Completes Merger Of JioCinema and Voot OTT Platforms

Viacom18, a prominent player in the Indian media and entertainment industry, has made significant strides in merging its two Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms, JioCinema and Voot. The integration process has reached an advanced stage, with technology backends fully aligned and a majority of Voot Select subscribers smoothly transitioning to JioCinema. The merger has led to the dissolution of Voot as a standalone platform, both in terms of functionality and visibility. A simple Google search for Voot redirects users to the JioCinema website, consolidating Viacom18's OTT presence under a single brand. Voot Select's loyal subscribers are being offered a seamless onboarding process onto the JioCinema platform. This thoughtful approach ensures that existing subscribers can continue to enjoy their favorite content without disruptions, while also benefiting from the enhanced offerings and features available on JioCinema.

Wipro Launches Center Of Excellence On Generative AI at IIT Delhi

Wipro Limited has announced the establishment of a groundbreaking Center of Excellence (CoE) on Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in partnership with the esteemed Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi. This collaboration manifests Wipro's commitment to drive continuous innovation in emerging technologies, solidifying its position as a frontrunner in the tech industry. The CoE's launch resonates as a significant milestone within Wipro's larger strategic vision, the Wipro ai360 ecosystem, which earmarks a staggering \$1 billion investment toward catalyzing AI-led innovation.

OpenAI's first acquisition is an AI design company

OpenAI has successfully acquired Global Illumination, an ingenious startup based in New York, which harnesses the power of AI to craft innovative creative tools, digital experiences, and robust infrastructure. The acquisition signals OpenAI's commitment to amplify its capabilities and revolutionize the AI landscape. Founded in the year 2021 by the dynamic trio of Thomas Dimson, Taylor Gordon, and Joey Flynn, Global Illumination has swiftly carved a niche for itself in the tech realm. The startup's illustrious portfolio boasts a dazzling array of products crafted for tech titans including Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Google, Pixar, and Riot Games. The endorsement of venture capital heavyweights such as Paradigm, Benchmark, and Slow further underscores the startup's profound potential.

LIC Acquires 6.7% Stake In Jio Financial Services Via RIL De-Merger Action

Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has announced its acquisition of a 6.7% stake in Jio Financial Services (JFSL), a non-banking financial services unit that emerged from the conglomerate helmed by Mukesh Ambani – Reliance Industries. The acquisition, carried out through a demerger action by Reliance Industries, is poised to have a notable impact on both entities and the broader financial markets. Jio Financial Services made its debut on the stock exchanges on August 21, entering the financial markets with a promising trajectory. The company, post-listing, boasted a market capitalization of approximately Rs 1.60 lakh crore, indicative of the investor interest and confidence in its potential. Despite its strong market capitalization, the stock faced challenges in its initial trading sessions. The stock experienced a downward trajectory for the second consecutive session, hitting the lower circuit limit – a threshold set by the stock exchanges to curb excessive volatility – for both BSE and NSE. The stock's price declined by 4.99% to Rs 239.20 on BSE and by 5% to Rs 236.45 on NSE. This phenomenon has led to discussions regarding the market's reaction to the demerger and the implications of this volatility on the company's valuation.

BHEL Achieves Milestone in Curbing NOx Emissions: Indigenous SCR Catalysts Manufactured

In a significant stride towards environmental responsibility, Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL), a prominent state-owned engineering company, has successfully developed the first set of indigenous Selective Catalyst Reactors (SCR) Catalysts. These catalysts play a crucial role in mitigating nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions from thermal power plants. Previously reliant on imports, this achievement underscores the 'Make in India' initiative championed by the government. Underlining their commitment to self-reliance and national innovation, BHEL has crafted a monumental milestone by producing homegrown SCR Catalysts. The catalysts are integral to tackling NOx emissions, a prevalent pollutant resulting from coal combustion in thermal power plants. This development aligns perfectly with the 'Make in India' campaign, boosting indigenous manufacturing and self-sufficiency.

Reliance Retail Launches 'Yousta' Fashion Stores; First Outlet In Hyderabad

Reliance Retail, the retail arm of billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd, has taken a significant step in the fashion retail sector with the introduction of its new brand, Yousta. The brand's debut was marked by the opening of its flagship store in Hyderabad's Sarath City Mall. This move is set to revolutionize the retail market by catering to the fashion needs of the youth segment while offering contemporary, technology-enabled shopping experiences. Yousta is positioned as a youth-centric fashion retail format that embraces contemporary trends and offers them at affordable prices. The brand recognizes the purchasing power and preferences of young consumers, aiming to provide them with high-fashion options that won't break the bank. In line with this approach, all products within the Yousta range are priced below Rs 999, and a majority of them are available for less than Rs 499. This pricing strategy is poised to resonate with budget-conscious young shoppers.

Hindustan Shipyard Signs ₹19,000 cr Contract With Defence Minister

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) took a significant step towards bolstering the Indian Navy's operational capabilities by signing a groundbreaking contract with Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), a state-owned company based in Visakhapatnam. The contract entails the acquisition of five Fleet Support Ships (FSS), marking a new era in naval logistics. This pioneering endeavor is set to provide unprecedented advantages to the Indian Navy, enabling prolonged and sustained missions without the need to return to port. The overall cost of this venture is estimated to be approximately ₹19,000 crore. The Fleet Support Ships (FSS) serve a crucial role in maritime operations by facilitating the replenishment of ships at sea. These vessels, weighing an impressive 44,000 tonnes each, are equipped to provide essential resources such as fuel, water, ammunition, and supplies to naval fleets on extended missions. This capability to operate independently for extended periods will significantly enhance the Indian Navy's reach and effectiveness, particularly in the vast expanse of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Zepto is first Indian unicorn of 2023, raises \$200 million at \$1.4 billion valuation

Online grocery delivery startup Zepto has successfully raised \$200 million in a Series-E funding round, achieving a valuation of \$1.4 billion. This achievement marks Zepto as the first unicorn of 2023. The funding was led by StepStone Group, a US-based private markets investment firm, and is StepStone Group's inaugural direct investment in an Indian company. Joining StepStone Group in this funding round is Goodwater Capital, a consumer-focused venture capital firm from California.

Noteworthy is the participation of existing investors, including Nexus Venture Partners, Glade Brook Capital, Lachy Groom, among others, who further solidified their support with substantial follow-on investments.

Zepto, established in response to the pandemic, was founded in 2021 by Aadit Palicha and Kaivalya Vohra, both dropouts from Stanford University.

The startup had previously raised \$200 million in a Series D funding round in 2022, led by Y Combinator's Continuity Fund, which valued the company at \$900 million.

Zepto's founders have also expressed their intention to list the company on public markets within the next two to three years.

Tata Steel and ACME Group Join Forces For India's Largest Green Hydrogen Project

In a significant partnership, ACME Group, a prominent renewable energy company, has joined forces with Tata Steel Special Economic Zone Ltd. (TSSEZL) to establish an expansive green hydrogen and green ammonia project within Odisha's Gopalpur Industrial Park. This venture is poised to become the largest facility of its kind in India, marking a significant stride towards sustainable energy production. The project is set to be situated at the Gopalpur Industrial Park (GIP) in Odisha, strategically chosen for its logistical advantages and existing infrastructure. ACME Group has secured 343 acres of land within TSSEZL's GIP to house the green hydrogen and derivatives unit, underlining their commitment to eco-friendly energy solutions. The estimated investment for the entire project amounts to Rs 27,000 crore, to be invested in progressive phases, reflecting the strategic approach to development.

Agreement News**India, Moldova agree to sign MoU for cooperation in agriculture**

On July 31, 2023, a meeting was held between the Minister of State for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Sushri Shobha Karandlaje, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Agriculture & Food Industries of Moldova, Mr. Vladimir Bolea, at Krishi Bhawan in New Delhi. The meeting aimed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in agriculture between India and Moldova, two countries that have enjoyed close and friendly diplomatic relations for 31 years. During the meeting, the two ministers discussed the potential for increasing bilateral trade in agricultural commodities and the exchange of knowledge and technology to enhance agricultural cooperation.

Indian Railways & IIT-Madras ink MoU for 5G testbed

The Ministry of Railways and the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) signed a memorandum of understanding ((MoU) to establish the India 5G testbed at the Indian Railway Institute of Signal Engineering and Telecommunications (IRISET) in Secunderabad; the facility would be dedicated to the testing and development of 5G use cases for Indian Railways. The MoU between IRISET and IIT-Madras aims to accelerate the indigenisation efforts of Indian Railways in the field of communications and create a testing facility for Indian Railways. The Indian Railways aims to leverage the potential of 5G technology to enhance its operational efficiency, passenger experience and overall safety. By simulating real-world scenarios, researchers and industry experts will explore innovative solutions to modernise various aspects of Railway communication and services.

PNGRB and World Bank to draft a roadmap for hydrogen blending in natural gas

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) and the World Bank have joined forces to develop a comprehensive roadmap for integrating hydrogen blending in natural gas and establishing the infrastructure for their transmission through gas pipelines in the country. The primary objective of the study is to develop a comprehensive roadmap for the rapid implementation of hydrogen blending in India. The study covers the following aspects:

Analysis of hydrogen demand and supply.

Technical assessment of the current pipeline network's compatibility for hydrogen blending.

Evaluation of the commercial potential of the pipeline sector.

Identification of policy and regulatory bottlenecks.

The study's recommendations include proposing amendments to the regulatory frameworks to align with the national objective of achieving a hydrogen consumption target of 5 million metric tonnes per annum by 2030. The study is scheduled to be completed within 16 weeks.

MakeMyTrip And Ministry Of Tourism To Launch Traveller's Map of India Microsite

Travel company MakeMyTrip has announced a collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism to introduce over 600 unique and unconventional travel destinations. The company has introduced a specialized microsite named 'Traveller's Map of India' to facilitate this initiative. This digital platform enables travelers to engage interactively and unearth hidden tourism treasures within India, tailored to their preferences. The creation of this meticulously crafted microsite aligns seamlessly with the Government of India's forward-looking 'DekhoApnaDesh' program. The 'Traveller's Map of India' resonates with the sentiments of every Indian explorer. This endeavor will grant every individual the authority to advocate for the nation's cultural, historical, natural, and geographical wonders. Minister of Tourism, Kishan Reddy, extended a warm welcome to MakeMyTrip's venture, applauding their efforts to showcase the variety of destinations within India and encourage domestic tourism.

Trinidad And Tobago Inks Pact For Sharing Indian Technology Stack

India and Trinidad and Tobago have recently entered into a significant partnership by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to share the renowned INDIA STACK technology. This collection of open APIs and digital public goods, pioneered by India, is designed to enhance identity, data, and payment services on a large scale. This move reflects India's commitment to aiding the digital transformation of nations through collaboration and technology sharing. INDIA STACK is an innovative assortment of technologies that encompass open APIs and digital public goods. Originating from India's own successful experiences, this collection is tailored to facilitate identity verification, data management, and payment services. Its proven effectiveness in serving India's massive population of over 1.4 billion makes it a suitable solution for nations seeking to enhance their own government digital services.

AICTE and Jio Institute FDP on Artificial Intelligence & Data Science

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has taken a significant step towards advancing the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science (DS) within the realm of education. Partnering with the renowned Jio Institute, AICTE has unveiled a comprehensive faculty development programme aimed at equipping academic leaders and senior faculty members with an in-depth understanding of AI and DS. With the programme set to commence on August 21, 2023, this collaboration holds the potential to reshape the educational landscape in India and beyond. At the forefront of this innovative initiative is the Jio Institute, acclaimed for its pioneering efforts in AI and DS (Data Science) education. The institute will serve as the host for a five-day residential faculty development programme that promises to immerse participants in the intricacies of AI and DS. Through an intensive curriculum and hands-on experiences, the programme aspires to empower educators with the knowledge and tools necessary to leverage AI for immersive and effective learning.



India, ASEAN agree to review FTA by 2025

In a significant move, India and the ASEAN countries have come to an agreement to reevaluate their existing free trade pact for goods. The aim of this review is to address the existing trade imbalances and disparities between the two parties. The announcement was made by the Commerce Ministry, indicating the commitment to enhance bilateral trade relations. The Joint Committee of the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA), which was originally signed in 2009, convened to discuss the roadmap for revisiting the pact. The committee successfully finalized the terms of reference for commencing fresh negotiations, setting the stage for a comprehensive review of the trade agreement. During a pivotal ASEAN-India Economic Ministers' meeting held in Indonesia, the ministers collectively agreed to a strategic approach for the review process. They decided to adhere to a quarterly negotiation schedule and set a definitive goal: concluding the review by the year 2025. This forward-looking target underlines the commitment to foster trade that is mutually beneficial and conducive to both parties' growth.

GSL and Kenya Shipyard Ltd Sign MoU For Collaboration In Shipbuilding

With its efforts to enhance security of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), especially on the eastern coast of Africa, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) and Kenya Shipyards Limited (KSL) to strengthen maritime security cooperation between the two nations. The agreement focuses on capacity building and collaboration in ship design and construction. The MoU was formalized in the presence of India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Defence Aden Bare Duale during their talks in New Delhi. This signing reflects the shared commitment of both nations to deepen their collaboration in maritime security. As one of the largest exporters of defence ships from the Indian subcontinent, GSL brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the partnership. On the other hand, Kenya Shipyards Limited was established by Kenya's National Security Council in August 2020 to address the operational requirements of the Kenyan Navy.

NITI Aayog and UNDP Collaborate to Accelerate SDGs in India

The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), the central think tank responsible for monitoring India's progress towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have signed a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at expediting India's journey towards achieving its SDGs. This collaboration underscores the commitment to drive sustainable and inclusive development in the country. BVR Subrahmanyam, CEO of NITI Aayog, expressed optimism about the partnership's potential impact: "With monitoring going beyond districts down to the block level, we see this partnership fostering data-driven policy interventions and programmatic action." This data-centric approach is expected to facilitate more precise and effective policy decisions, contributing to sustainable development.

Appointment News**Microsoft appoints Puneet Chandok to lead India operations**

Microsoft has appointed Puneet Chandok as the new Corporate Vice President of Microsoft India and South Asia, effective from September 1, 2023. He will take over operational responsibilities from Anant Maheshwari and will lead the integration of Microsoft's businesses across South Asia, including countries like Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Puneet aims to strengthen Microsoft's presence in the region and focus on key industries through a customer-centric approach, with generative AI as a core technology. This appointment comes during a period of significant market expansion for Microsoft, especially in cloud technology and digital innovation. With a massive partner ecosystem globally, including a substantial network in India generating high cloud revenue, and investments in local infrastructure, such as a new data center in Hyderabad, Microsoft's growth aligns with India's emergence as a global innovation hub. The company is dedicated to serving the market with transformative digital technology to contribute to India's economic progress and inclusive growth agenda.

Shohini Sinha To Head FBI's Field Office In Salt Lake City

Shohini Sinha, an Indian-American, has been selected by FBI Director Christopher Wray as the new special agent in charge of the Salt Lake City Field Office. She previously held the position of executive special assistant to the Director at FBI Headquarters in Washington, DC. Sinha started her career with the FBI in 2001 as a special agent and was initially assigned to the Milwaukee Field Office, where she focused on counterterrorism investigations. She also served in temporary assignments at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, the FBI Legal Attaché Office in London, and the Baghdad Operations Center. She also served in temporary assignments at the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, the FBI Legal Attaché Office in London, and the Baghdad Operations Center. Sinha was in 2009 promoted to supervisory special agent and transferred to the Counterterrorism Division in Washington, DC. She served as program manager of Canada-based extraterritorial investigations and facilitated liaison efforts with Washington, DC-based Canadian liaison officers, according to the FBI release.

Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba gets one-year extension

Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba has been officially granted a one-year extension by the Central government, making him the longest-serving cabinet secretary in India's history. The decision was made by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). This extension comes as a result of the relaxation of important rules, allowing him to continue in his position beyond August 30, 2023. The Central government has the authority to grant an extension in service to the cabinet secretary in the public interest. However, this extension cannot exceed four years in total. By relaxing the All India Services (Death-Cum-Retirement Benefits) Rules, 1958, and Rule 56(d) of the Fundamental Rules, Rajiv Gauba's extension has been made possible. Rajiv Gauba is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the 1982 batch who assumed the position of Cabinet Secretary in 2019.

Tesla appoints India-origin Vaibhav Taneja as its CFO

Indian-origin Vaibhav Taneja has been named Tesla's new Chief Financial Officer as the previous finance chief Zachary Kirkhorn announced his decision to step down. He was appointed Tesla CFO in addition to his current role as Chief Accounting Officer (CAO) of the US-based electric car major after Kirkhorn, Tesla's Master of Coin and finance chief for the last four years, stepped down from the post. Mr Kirkhorn's 13-year tenure with the Elon Musk-led American EV giant was described as one of "tremendous expansion and growth" in the company filing. Mr Taneja has served as Tesla's CAO since March 2019 and as the Corporate Controller since May 2018. He served as the Assistant Corporate Controller between February 2017 and May 2018, and from March 2016, served in various finance and accounting roles at SolarCity Corporation, a US-based solar panel developer acquired by Tesla in 2016.

Sanjay Kumar Agarwal takes charge as CBIC Chairman

IRS officer Sanjay Kumar Agarwal has taken charge as the Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC). Agarwal succeeds Vivek Johri who superannuated as CBIC chief on May 31. In an order issued on August 5, the finance ministry had appointed Agarwal, who was holding charge of CBIC member compliance management, looking into investigations. The CBIC, which deals with policy making in indirect taxes — GST, customs, excise — is headed by a chairman and has six members in the board. The board is assisted by principal chief commissioners/ chief commissioners and principal director generals/ director generals. IRS officer Sanjay Kumar Agarwal has taken charge as the Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

Justice Subhasis Talapatra sworn in as new Chief Justice of Orissa High Court

Justice Subhasis Talapatra was officially appointed as the 33rd Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court. The oath of office was administered by Governor Ganeshi Lal, marking his succession of Justice S Muralidhar. He is set to hold the position of Chief Justice for a relatively short period of under two months, concluding with his retirement on October 3, 2023. Born on October 4, 1961, in Udaipur, Tripura, Justice Talapatra began his judicial journey. He assumed the role of a judge in the Tripura High Court on September 13, 2013, having previously served as an additional judge in the same court from November 15, 2011. In 2018 and 2019, he had the honor of temporarily holding the position of acting Chief Justice of the Tripura High Court on two occasions. He was transferred to the Orissa High Court as a judge on June 1, 2022, where he officially took the oath of office on June 10, 2022.

Kamlesh Varshney, Amarjeet Singh appointed SEBI whole-time members

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Kamlesh Varshney and Amarjeet Singh as SEBI Whole-Time Members. While Varshney, a 1990-batch officer of the Indian Revenue Service,

is a joint secretary at the revenue department in the Finance Ministry, Singh is an executive director at the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). Both Varshney and Singh have been appointed for three years from the date of assumption of charge or until further orders, whichever is earlier, according to an order issued by the Secretariat of the ACC. At SEBI, Varshney and Singh will fill in the vacancies created by the retirement of S K Mohanty and Ananta Barua.

Parminder Chopra appointed as CMD of Power Finance Corporation (PFC)

Power Finance Corporation (PFC) has appointed Parminder Chopra as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD); she becomes the first woman to lead India's largest NBFC. Chopra assumed the top job at the power sector lender with effect from August 14, 2023. She earlier held additional charge as CMD from June 1, and was Director (Finance) from July 1, 2020. She also played a key role in the successful implementation of a Rs 1.12 lakh crore Liquidity Infusion Scheme (LIS) for the power distribution sector, which was rolled out as part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

BPCL announces Rahul Dravid as Brand Ambassador

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) has announced cricketer Rahul Dravid as its new brand ambassador. He will endorse BPCL's Pure for Sure initiative and range of MAK lubricants. This exciting partnership highlights Bharat Petroleum's strong dedication to quality, authenticity, and excellence. Rahul Dravid embodies exceptional sportsmanship, serves as a role model, and possesses qualities such as integrity, dependability, and trustworthiness that align perfectly with our values at BPCL. Rahul Dravid will endorse BPCL's well-known Pure for Sure initiative and their range of MAK lubricants. As an icon who elevated Indian cricket to new heights, Rahul truly represents our values of trust, ethics, service, and consistency. His association with BPCL will further emphasize our commitment to delivering quality products consumers can rely on throughout the country.

Neelkanth Mishra appointed part-time chairman of UIDAI

The Centre has announced the appointment of Neelkanth Mishra as the part-time Chairperson of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). Mr. Mishra, known for his expertise in economics and research, currently serves as the Chief Economist of Axis Bank and also holds the position of Head of Global Research at Axis Capital. Neelkanth Mishra boasts an impressive professional journey that spans several decades, during which he has made significant contributions to the world of finance and research. Prior to his association with Axis Bank, he spent twenty years at Credit Suisse, a prominent financial institution based in Zurich. Throughout his tenure, Mishra held various crucial roles, such as co-head of APAC Strategy, India Equity Strategy Head, and Head of Research in India. This diverse range of responsibilities allowed him to gain an in-depth understanding of the intricacies of financial markets, strategic planning, and economic analysis.

Justice Prakash Shrivastava appointed as NGT chairperson

Justice Prakash Shrivastava has been appointed as Chairperson of National Green Tribunal (NGT). After the former Chairperson Justice A.K Goel retired. After the former Chairperson Justice A.K Goel retired in July, Justice Sheo Kumar Singh was appointed as the Acting Chairperson. Justice Srivastav Enrolled as Advocate on February 2, 1987. He Practised on Tax, Civil and Constitutional sides in the Supreme Court of India at New Delhi. He was later appointed as a Judge of the High Court of Madhya Pradesh on January 18, 2008 and became a permanent Judge on January 15, 2010. Justice Shrivastava was born on March 31, 1961. In the year 1987, he was enrolled as an advocate and practiced in tax, civil, and constitutional law, at the Supreme Court. Later, he was appointed as an additional judge at the Madhya Pradesh High Court on January 18, 2008 before being made permanent on January 15, 2010. Subsequently, Justice Shrivastava served as the Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court from October 11, 2021 till his retirement on March 30, 2023.

SBI Appoints Four Directors To The Board

The State Bank of India (SBI) has appointed four directors namely Ketan Shivji Vikamsey, Mrugank Madhukar Paranjape, Rajesh Kumar Dubey and Dharmendra Singh Shekhawat to the central board of the bank. They were appointed for a period of 3 years with effect from 26th June 2023 to 25th June 2026. Ketan Shivji Vikamsey and Mrugank Madhukar Paranjape have been reappointed as the director (elected under Section 19(c) of SBI Act 1955) at SBI's Central board. They have been holding this position since June 2020. Rajesh Kumar Dubey and Dharmendra Singh Shekhawat have been appointed as the Directors (elected under section 19 (c) of the SBI Act, 1955) at SBI's Central Board. Rajesh Kumar Dubey and Dharmendra Singh Shekhawat have replaced B Venugopal and Ganesh Natarajan, whose tenure as Director ended on 25th June 2023.

Former CJI NV Ramana appointed as member of International Mediation Panel

Former Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana has been appointed as member of the International Mediator Panel of Singapore International Mediation Centre (SIMC). Chairman of SIMC George Lim presented Justice Ramana the letter of appointment on Tuesday in Singapore. The former CJI is in Singapore to take part in the "Singapore Convention Week", the annual convention organised by Singapore's Ministry of Law, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and over 20 partner organisations. Justice Ramana met representatives of SIMC and four top Indian corporate majors Tata, Reliance, Mahindra and Aditya Birla groups, who came forward to sign 'Declaration of Intent' to support mediation at the initiative of Justice Ramana.

Geetika Srivastava becomes India's First Woman Chargé d'Affaires In Pakistan

Geetika Srivastava, currently serving as joint secretary at the headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), will be India's new chargé d'affaires at its high commission in Islamabad, Pakistan. She will succeed Suresh Kumar, who is likely to return to New Delhi. After 77 years of Independence, India has appointed a female head of mission in Pakistan. The appointment of Geetika Srivastava as the new CDA in Islamabad signifies a progressive step by the Indian government as it breaks the traditional male-dominated pattern of diplomatic appointments to Pakistan. This is a significant move as Srivastava will be the first woman to lead the Indian High Commission in Pakistan, reflecting a commitment to gender equality and empowering women in leadership roles.

Banking News**Digital payments grew significantly at 13.24% in FY23, shows RBI index**

In the fiscal year 2022-2023 (FY23), digital payments in India experienced remarkable growth, as indicated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI). The RBI-DPI, a comprehensive measure of payment digitization, displayed a substantial increase across all parameters during this period, driven by significant advancements in payment infrastructure and performance across the country. The index for March 2023 recorded a value of 395.58, marking a 13.24% growth compared to September 2022 (377.46), as announced on January 31, 2023. The RBI-DPI began with a base index value of 100 in March 2018 and has been consistently rising ever since. It provides a reliable gauge of the extent of digital payment adoption in India and is updated semi-annually, with a four-month lag.

SBI Posts Highest-Ever Quarterly Profit Of ₹ 16,884 Crore

State Bank of India (SBI), one of India's largest public sector banks, reported its financial results for the April-June quarter of 2023-24. The bank achieved its highest-ever quarterly profit at ₹ 16,884 crore, representing a significant jump from ₹ 6,068 crore in the same period the previous year. This remarkable performance was attributed to a decline in bad loans and increased interest income. On a consolidated basis, SBI's net income also saw substantial growth, rising more than two-fold to ₹ 18,537 crore compared to ₹ 7,325 crore a year ago. However, despite the outstanding results, the bank's shares declined by nearly 3 per cent due to some sequential indicators showing marginal deterioration.

Axis Bank Partners with Kiwi to Bolster 'Credit on UPI' on RuPay Credit Cards

Kiwi, a fintech company specializing in enabling credit on UPI, has partnered with Axis Bank to introduce a lifetime free Axis Bank KWIK credit cards through its app. This unique partnership of Kiwi and Axis Bank aims to offer customers the convenience of UPI's fast and secure payments while enjoying the benefits of credit and card rewards. With a focus on simplicity and innovation, Kiwi aims to provide seamless onboarding and instant virtual credit cards to one million users within the next 18 months. The partnership between Kiwi and Axis Bank holds great significance as it combines fintech innovation with traditional banking, creating a seamless payment solution for users. By offering credit card rewards on UPI transactions, the collaboration aims to promote digital payments and enhance financial inclusion. Customers benefit from a secure and rewarding payment experience, while Axis Bank strengthens its position as an innovative bank.

HDFC Bank's Jagdishan Highest Paid Bank CEO in FY23 with Rs 10.55cr Pay

In the fiscal year 2023, Sashidhar Jagdishan, the CEO of HDFC Bank has taken the top spot as the highest paid bank CEO. With an overall package of Rs.10.55 crore, Jagdishan's compensation stands out among his peers in the banking sector. Sashidhar Jagdishan took over as CEO of the HDFC Bank in late 2020 and has shown exceptional leadership during his tenure. His contribution to the bank's growth and profitability has been rewarded with a total remuneration of over Rs.10.55 crore in the FY23 which positions him as the highest-earning bank CEO in the country. Jagdishan's package included a basic salary of Rs.2.82 crore, allowances and perquisites of Rs.3.31 crore, provident fund of Rs.33.92 lakh and a performance bonus of Rs.3.63 crore. Kaizad Bharucha, the deputy managing director of the HDFC bank, is another high-earning executive from HDFC Bank with the total earning of Rs.10 crore for FY23. Bharucha is likely the second highest grossing banker in India. His expertise and strategic contribution in the bank's operations have been duly recognised in his compensation.

Profit of PSU Banks More Than Doubles To Rs 34,774 Cr In Q1

The public sector banks (PSBs) have registered an impressive profit of over Rs 34,774 crore in the first quarter of June 2023 showcasing a substantial increase that more than doubles their previous earnings. As per the quarterly data published by public sector banks, the collective profit reported by the 12 state-owned banks amounted to Rs 15,306 crore, during the corresponding April-June period in the prior fiscal year. The uptick in interest rates played to the banks' advantage, resulting in a favorable net interest margin (NIM) for the

quarter. The majority of banks achieved NIMs surpassing 3 percent. Notably, Bank of Maharashtra, situated in Pune, secured the highest NIM at 3.86 percent, closely trailed by Central Bank at 3.62 percent and Indian Bank at 3.61 percent for the quarter. In the initial quarter, four lenders achieved a profit growth exceeding 100 percent. Punjab National Bank achieved the highest percentage growth, marking a substantial 307 percent increase in profit, from Rs 308 crore to Rs 1,255 crore, in comparison to the corresponding quarter of the previous year. Following closely, the State Bank of India (SBI) reported a noteworthy 178 percent growth in its bottom line, reaching a profit of Rs 16,884 crore. Bank of India also demonstrated remarkable progress, experiencing a surge of 176 percent in profit to reach Rs 1,551 crore.

RBI's August 2023 Monetary Policy Meeting Highlights

RBI's August 2023 Monetary Policy meeting highlights encompass the RBI's decisions, economic assessments, inflation forecasts, and policy measures discussed during the August 2023 Monetary Policy Meeting.

Repo Rate Unchanged at 6.5%:

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has maintained the repo rate at 6.50% during its August 2023 monetary policy meeting. The decision was taken unanimously by the six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC).

Inflation Trends and Forecasts:

Headline inflation, which dropped to 4.3% in May 2023, experienced a rise in June and is expected to further surge in July and August due to higher vegetable prices. The RBI has projected India's Q2 retail inflation at 6.2%, Q3 at 5.7%, and Q4 at 5.2% for the current fiscal year. The CPI inflation forecast for FY2023-24 has been revised from 5.1% to 5.4% due to shocks in vegetable prices.

AU Bank Becomes India's First Bank To Provide 24x7 Video Banking Service

AU Small Finance Bank, the largest small finance bank in India, has taken a remarkable step forward in customer service with the launch of their innovative 24x7 video banking platform. This pioneering service enables customers to engage in face-to-face video interactions with expert bankers, akin to video calls. This move redefines convenience, as it provides round-the-clock support, even during weekends and holidays. AU Small Finance Bank has etched its name in history as the first financial services provider in India to present a 24x7 live video banking solution. Through this cutting-edge platform, customers gain unparalleled access to live video interactions with dedicated bankers at any hour, on any day. This leap in technology empowers not only tech-savvy millennials but also newcomers to banking, busy professionals, and senior citizens, delivering a personalized and hassle-free banking experience.

RBI Introduces UDGAM Portal: Your Guide to Reclaiming Unclaimed Deposits

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has unveiled a groundbreaking solution for individuals seeking their unclaimed deposits. Named the UDGAM (Unclaimed Deposits – Gateway to Access Information) portal, this centralized web platform is designed to simplify the process of locating unclaimed deposits across various banks. Here’s a comprehensive breakdown of the key features and steps involved. The RBI’s UDGAM portal serves as a user-friendly tool for individuals to track down their unclaimed deposits seamlessly, consolidating information from multiple banks into a single accessible location. With the growing prevalence of unclaimed deposits, RBI has been proactively promoting awareness campaigns to educate the public about this issue. Through UDGAM, RBI aims to empower citizens to identify their unclaimed deposits and engage with their respective banks to initiate claims.

Axis Bank partners with RBI Innovation Hub to launch Kisan Credit cards

In a significant partnership, Axis Bank has joined forces with the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), a subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), to introduce two groundbreaking lending products. These products are powered by the Public Tech Platform for Frictionless Credit (PTPFC), a pioneering initiative launched by RBIH.

Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) for Agricultural Growth:

Digital Agricultural Financing: Axis Bank is set to revolutionize agricultural financing by launching the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) through the PTPFC platform.

Initial Rollout: As a pilot project, the KCC will be initially offered in Madhya Pradesh, catering to the agricultural community in the region.

Limit and Accessibility: Eligible customers will be able to access KCCs with a credit limit of up to Rs 1.6 lakh, empowering them to invest in their agricultural endeavors.

Streamlined Application Process: The entire application process for KCC will be conducted digitally, eliminating the need for customers to submit physical documents.

Canara Bank Pioneers UPI-Interoperable Digital Rupee Mobile App for CBDC Transactions

Canara Bank, a leading player in the Indian banking sector, has taken a monumental step by introducing the UPI interoperable digital rupee mobile application. This move places Canara Bank at the forefront of innovation, becoming the first bank across both the public and commercial sectors to offer this pioneering feature. The app, named the Canara Digital Rupee app, marks a significant milestone as a part of the Reserve Bank of India’s (RBI) Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) pilot project. This forward-thinking initiative empowers customers to seamlessly complete transactions through their smartphones. With the Canara Digital Rupee app, customers can effortlessly scan merchant

UPI QR codes, facilitating payments using the digital currency. This streamlined process brings a new level of convenience to digital payments, enhancing the overall transaction experience for users.

Yes Bank Launches All-In-One ‘IRIS’ Mobile App

In a significant leap forward for India’s digital banking landscape, YES BANK has introduced its groundbreaking mobile banking app, IRIS by YES BANK. This innovative app is poised to redefine the way customers engage with their financial institutions, offering an unparalleled combination of convenience, efficiency, and personalization. With over 100 features and services available at the touch of a button, iris by YES BANK represents a quantum leap in digital banking. Designed to cater to both existing and new customers, IRIS by YES BANK introduces a new era of banking convenience. The app’s sleek and intuitive user interface is crafted to provide a simplified banking experience that appeals to users of all age groups and backgrounds. Beyond its user-friendly design, the app is fortified with state-of-the-art safety features, including Biometric Authentication, Sim-Binding, and a 2-factor Verification system, ensuring utmost security for customers’ financial data. A highlight of iris by YES BANK is its co-creation process. Based on valuable feedback from YES BANK customers, the app is a product of collaboration between the bank and its clientele.

RBI Raises Offline Payment Transaction Upper Limit to ₹500 from ₹200

In a recent development, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has made changes to the offline payment transaction regulations, aiming to enhance user convenience and digital payment adoption. The central bank has decided to increase the upper limit of offline payment transactions from ₹200 to ₹500, with immediate effect. This move is part of RBI’s ongoing efforts to streamline payment processes and adapt to evolving consumer needs.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approves merger of Akola Merchant Co-operative Bank with Jalgaon Peoples Co-operative Bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted its approval for the amalgamation of Akola Merchant Co-operative Bank with The Jalgaon Peoples Co-operative Bank. This strategic move is set to be enacted from August 28, as announced by the central bank.

The branches of Akola Merchant Co-operative Bank will be seamlessly integrated as branches of The Jalgaon Peoples Co-operative Bank starting from August 28.

This integration aims to streamline operations and services for customers under a unified entity.

The RBI had recently given the nod for the amalgamation of Twin Cities Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd with Kranti Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd, signifying a trend of such consolidations in the co-operative banking sector.

Airtel Payments Bank partners with Frontier Markets, Mastercard to support 1 lakh women-owned businesses

Airtel Payments Bank, in collaboration with Mastercard Center and Frontier Markets, has introduced a transformative initiative named She Leads Bharat:Udyam. This initiative is designed to uplift 100,000 women-owned small businesses by providing them with opportunities to learn and earn. The initial phase of She Leads Bharat:Udyam is set to impact women-owned small businesses in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Through Frontier Markets' unique Meri-Saheli platform, 100,000 such businesses will gain the ability to learn and earn. This platform, known for its flexibility and proprietary nature, will empower these businesses by offering a range of opportunities. Among the 100,000 women small business owners, 10,000 will be provided the chance to expand their enterprises by becoming Business Correspondents (BCs) for Airtel Payments Bank. This strategic step is aligned with Airtel Payments Bank's commitment to empower rural women to embark on entrepreneurial journeys.

SBI launches Aadhaar-Based Enrolment For Social Security Schemes

The State Bank of India (SBI) has taken a significant step towards enhancing financial inclusivity and social welfare by introducing an innovative Customer Service Points (CSP) functionality. This functionality allows customers to seamlessly enrol in essential social security schemes using just their Aadhaar cards. The move was unveiled by SBI's Chairman, Dinesh Khara, who emphasized the bank's commitment to breaking down barriers to financial security through technology-driven solutions. This newly introduced technology-driven enhancement stands as a testament to SBI's dedication to improving financial inclusivity and social welfare through digitization. This strategic step aims to make the process of accessing social security schemes smoother and more accessible to all individuals, especially those who have faced challenges in navigating traditional financial systems.

Bandhan Bank Authorized by RBI for Civil Pension Disbursement

In a significant development, Bandhan Bank has been granted authorization by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to serve as an authorized pension disbursement bank. This authorization is in association with the Central Pension Accounting Office (CPAO), a part of the Ministry of Finance. The bank is set to collaborate closely with the CPAO to initiate and streamline the process of disbursing civil pensions. Bandhan Bank's newfound role as an authorized pension disbursement bank bears substantial implications for a range of beneficiaries. This authorization enables the bank to effectively disburse pensions to a variety of recipients-

Central Government Employees, Territorial Scope, Judicial Retirees, All India Service Officers, Former Parliament Members, Distinguished Leaders.

Axis Bank Introduces 'Infinity Savings Account' with Zero Domestic Transaction Fees

Axis Bank, a prominent player in India's private banking sector, has taken a groundbreaking step by launching the 'Infinity Savings Account.' This innovative savings account variant is designed to cater to the needs of digitally savvy customers who are avid users of subscription-based services. With the 'Infinity Savings Account,' Axis Bank is set to redefine the banking experience, offering exclusive privileges and removing barriers that traditionally accompanied banking services. The 'Infinity Savings Account' comes with a range of exclusive privileges that aim to provide customers with a seamless and transparent banking journey.

Science & Technology News

ISRO injects Chandrayaan-3 into translunar orbit

The Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft, which marks India's third lunar exploration mission, has accomplished a noteworthy achievement by entering the moon's sphere of influence. This successful entry was made possible through a TransLunar Injection (TLI) executed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The upcoming crucial step is the Lunar Orbit Insertion (LOI) scheduled for August 5, during which the spacecraft's liquid engine will be activated once more to position it into a lunar orbit. ISRO's Telemetry, Tracking, and Command Network (ISTRAC) in Bengaluru has executed the TransLunar Injection (TLI), enabling Chandrayaan-3 to successfully complete its orbits around Earth and begin its journey towards the Moon. The spacecraft's health status has been confirmed as normal, ensuring a promising start to its lunar mission.

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman launches Worldcoin crypto project

Open AI CEO Sam Altman along with two co-founders launched the Worldcoin crypto project to grant users a verified digital identity and access to a financial project. Worldcoin is a crypto-currency project that is launched by the Open AI CEO Sam Altman along with Alex Blania and Max Novendstern with the main aim to provide its users with a private digital identity—"a World's Identity"—after they register in person, where an "Orb" imaging device scans their eye's unique iris pattern to verify they are "a real and unique person." Orb: Orb is a silver sphere that can capture a high-resolution image of the iris, which is unique for every individual. The orb then encrypts the image and sends it back to a blockchain network, where it is matched with a Worldcoin address. The person who scans their eyes receives some Worldcoins as a reward for joining the network.

Chandrayaan-3 has been Successfully inserted into Lunar Orbit

Chandrayaan-3, the country's lunar mission, has been successfully entered the lunar orbit after a journey of twenty-three days. This milestone marks a significant step in India's endeavor to become the first nation to achieve a soft landing on the moon. In this article you will get to know about the recent developments of Chandrayaan-3 and its exciting journey. Twenty-three days ago, Chandrayaan-3 started its exciting journey from Earth towards the Moon. For the last five days, the spacecraft has been steadily moving closer to the moon, carefully adjusting its path to enter the moon's orbit. On Saturday's evening, Chandrayaan-3 successfully entered into the lunar orbit, making a significant milestone in the mission's journey. As the spacecraft started circling the moon, it began transmitting signals to the Mission Operators Complex (MOX) at the ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC). The successful entry of spacecraft shows its readiness for further maneuvers and operations in the lunar orbit.

Digital registry on organ transplants to streamline donations on cards

The National Health Authority (NHA) and the Ministry of Health are actively engaged in the development of an Organ Donation Registry, aimed at introducing structural improvements to the National Organ Tissue Transplantation Organisation (NOTTO). The NOTTO is responsible for arranging organ transplantation operations throughout the nation. The establishment of this digital registry is anticipated to eradicate intermediaries within the system. The National Health Authority will transform these policies into a digital framework. This transformation will encompass the complete digitization and transparency of all organ transplantation processes. The availability of recipient and donor records will streamline the process of organ allocation for patients in critical need. The registry will be integrated with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission through the Ayushman Bharat Health Accounts (ABHA) program.

Russia set to make historic return to Moon with Luna-25

Russia is to launch its first lunar landing spacecraft, Luna-25, on August 11, marking a significant step in its renewed lunar exploration efforts. This mission follows closely after India's Chandrayaan-3 lunar lander launch, reflecting a global interest in exploring the moon's south pole, potentially rich in resources like ice for future human habitation. Luna-25, launching from the Vostochny cosmodrome, aims to explore the moon's south pole region, believed to hold substantial ice deposits. Despite the proximity in timing, Roscosmos assures no interference between Luna-25 and Chandrayaan-3 missions due to different landing areas. The spacecraft, weighing 1.8 tons and carrying 31 kg of scientific equipment, will orbit the moon for five to seven days before descending to one of three potential landing sites near the pole.

India's first Solar Mission Aditya L1 to be launched on 2nd September

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is launching its first solar mission, Aditya-L1, to study the Sun. The mission will be placed in a halo orbit around the Lagrange point 1 (L1), which is about 1.5 million kilometers from Earth. From this vantage point, Aditya-L1 will be able to study the Sun's atmosphere, magnetic fields, and space weather impacts.

'Pibot,' the humanoid robot that can safely pilot an airplane

The Korea Advanced Institute of Science & Technology (KAIST) is making groundbreaking advancements in aviation with the development of "Pibot," a humanoid robot designed to fly aircraft using its own dexterity and advanced AI capabilities. Pibot's ability to manipulate flight instruments, understand complex manuals, and react quickly to emergency situations showcases its potential to transform aviation and other industries. Pibot represents a groundbreaking innovation with the objective of enabling autonomous flight in existing aircraft without requiring any cockpit modifications. Through emulating human pilot actions and choices, Pibot envisions a revolutionary phase of automated aviation. Pibot boasts state-of-the-art robotic arms and fingers integrated with cutting-edge high-precision control mechanisms. This enables Pibot to adeptly handle flight instruments and oversee cockpit switches, even when faced with challenging conditions such as intense vibrations.

Agnikul Cosmos Begins Integration of its First Satellite Rocket

Chennai-based Agnikul Cosmos has commenced the integration process of its groundbreaking launch vehicle, Agnibaan SORTeD (Sub-Orbital Technological Demonstrator), with its private launchpad situated at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. While the exact launch date remains undisclosed, the recent event marks a pivotal milestone in Agnikul Cosmos's pursuit of space innovation. The Agnilet engine, a marvel of innovation, is an entirely 3D-printed, single-piece, 6 kN semi-cryogenic engine. This innovative propulsion system marks a departure from conventional rocket engines and showcases Agnikul Cosmos's commitment to pushing the boundaries of space technology. Unlike traditional sounding rockets that follow guide rails during launch, the Agnibaan SORTeD will ascend vertically and meticulously follow a predetermined trajectory. Throughout its flight, the launch vehicle will execute a precisely choreographed sequence of maneuvers, a series of events meticulously configured to validate key technologies pivotal to the success of the company's upcoming orbital flights.

India Becomes 4th Country landed Successfully on Moon

India successfully landed its Chandrayaan-3 mission on the lunar surface on August 23, 2023, making it the fourth country to do so after the United States, Russia, and China. The lander Vikram touched down on the south pole of the moon, a region that has never been explored before. The rover Pragyan is expected to roll out of the lander and begin its exploration of the lunar surface in the coming days. The successful landing of Chandrayaan-3 is a major achievement for India's space program and a testament to the hard work and dedication of the scientists and engineers who made it possible. It also puts India in a select group of spacefaring nations and furthers its ambition to become a leading player in the global space race. The Chandrayaan-3 mission is expected to collect valuable data about the lunar south pole, which is thought to be rich in water ice. This information could be used to support future human exploration of the moon. The mission is also expected to help scientists to better understand the formation and evolution of the moon.

ISRO's next mission to Moon is with Japanese, named LUPEX

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is preparing for one more lunar mission, this one in collaboration with Japanese space agency, The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA). This mission, called LUPEX, or Lunar Polar Exploration, is slated for 2024-25. But there would be more in the Chandrayaan series as well. LUPEX will offer ISRO another opportunity to probe the surface of the Moon. As its name suggests, LUPEX will also explore the polar regions of the Moon, this time venturing into the permanently shaded regions. One half of the Moon never faces the Sun, and is therefore permanently dark. To land in these areas, the spacecraft and the onboard instruments have to have an alternative power supply option through an onboard battery.

Schemes and Committees News**NATIONAL MISSION ON LIBRARIES SCHEME**

The National Mission on Libraries is an initiative of the Ministry of Culture under the Government of India, aimed at the modernization and digital interconnection of almost 9,000 libraries throughout the country. Its primary goal is to grant readers easy access to a vast array of books and information. The ambitious project is estimated to cost approximately 1000 crores. It has been specifically designed to cater the needs of a diverse audience, including students, researchers, scientists, professionals, children, artists, and differently-abled individuals. The foundation for the National Mission on Libraries (NML) was laid down by the National Policy on Library and Information System (NAPLIS) in 1985. A committee chaired by Prof. D. P. Chattopadhyaya envisioned NAPLIS to foster, promote, and sustain the organizations, availability, and use of information. The policy aimed to leverage the latest advances in technology and train library and information personnel to meet the evolving information needs of society.

Over 6.23 Crore Loans Sanctioned Under Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana in FY 2022-23

In Financial Year (FY) 2022-23, the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) has achieved a significant milestone by sanctioning over 6.23 crore loans. The Union Minister for State for Finance, Dr. Bhagwat Kisanrao Karad, shared this information in a written reply during a Lok Sabha session. The PMMY aims to facilitate access to institutional finance for new and existing micro units or enterprises, offering loans of up to 10 lakh rupees. The primary goal of the PMMY is to provide financial support to micro-businesses and entrepreneurs who may not have access to formal credit channels. By offering loans up to 10 lakh rupees, the scheme aims to boost entrepreneurship, generate employment, and foster economic growth at the grassroots level.

Education Ministry Selects Oracle Cloud Infrastructure to modernise edtech platform DIKSHA

The ministry of education has selected Oracle Cloud Infrastructure to modernise the national education technology platform Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA), the company. The migration will help make DIKSHA more accessible and lower its IT costs. Under the seven-year collaboration pact, OCI will help the ministry use DIKSHA to provide educational resources to millions of additional students, teachers and collaborators across the country. The platform supports 1.48 million schools across 35 states and Union Territories and is available in 36 Indian languages. DIKSHA was built for school education and foundational learning programmes and represents one of India's largest and most successful Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) initiatives. Using the open-source platform Sunbird – developed by the EkStep Foundation – DIKSHA helps teachers support inclusive learning for underserved communities and disabled students across the country.

Kerala to soon see off its overseas emigrants with Shubhayatra scheme

The State government of Kerala has launched a groundbreaking scheme called 'Shubhayatra'. The scheme aims to provide much-needed financial support to first-time overseas emigrants from Kerala, facilitating a positive and productive migration ecosystem. With a financial assistance of up to ₹2 lakh, a tax holiday for six months, and attractive interest subvention, the scheme intends to help eligible candidates cover the incidental expenses associated with overseas employment. In support of the 'Shubhayatra' scheme, the Kerala government has allocated ₹2 crore in the current financial year for providing tax holidays and interest subvention to emigrants. The tax holiday and interest subvention aim to alleviate the financial burden on first-time emigrants and promote higher quality professional migration from the State. Candidates who avail of the soft loan will have a grace period of up to three years to repay the borrowed amount.

PM Modi to Launch ₹24,470 Crore Revamp of 508 Railway Stations under Amrit Bharat Scheme

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to virtually lay the foundation stone for the redevelopment of 508 railway stations across India on August 6. The ambitious project, executed under the Amrit Bharat Scheme, aims to enhance passenger amenities and improve railway infrastructure. With an estimated cost of ₹24,470 crore, the redevelopment work is a significant step towards modernizing the railway system. The government places a strong emphasis on improving passenger amenities, and Prime Minister Modi is personally overseeing the progress of the Railways. His valuable inputs have been instrumental in designing these revamped stations, ensuring a seamless and comfortable experience for travelers. Out of a total of 1,309 stations, 508 have been chosen for the initial phase of redevelopment under the Amrit Bharat Scheme. These stations are located in 10 states: Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu. The ongoing construction work at 24 stations in these states carries a budget of ₹11,136 crore.

SC to Appoint All-Woman Panel to Oversee Relief in Manipur

Chief Justice of India, D.Y. Chandrachud has announced the formation of an all-women panel to help bring healing and relief to the violence-stricken region in Manipur. The panel will consist of three former High Court judges, with Justice Gita Mittal as its head. The panel aims to provide healing touch to the situation in Manipur. The committee's main task is to oversee relief and rehabilitation efforts, restore homes and places of worship and improve the overall relief work in the violent-affected areas. This broad-based committee will focus on addressing the various aspects of the situation in Manipur and bring about positive changes. Chief Justice, D.Y. Chandrachud also appointed a retired IPS officer, Dattatray Padsalgikar to monitor the investigation of the cases that has been arisen from the violence. Over 6,500 FIRs have been filed from May to July in Manipur.

GOI says Crop Insurance Claims of worth Rs. 2,761.10 crore pending

According to the recent data, a significant backlog of pending crop insurance claims totally approximately Rs.2,716.10 crore was revealed till 2021-22 under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna (PMFBY). The maximum pendency of crop insurance claims is in Rajasthan, followed by Maharashtra and Gujarat. The delays in settling these claims have stemmed from various factors, as noted by Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomer. These include the late transmission of yield data, delayed release of the government's premium subsidy share and disagreements over yield-related matters between insurance companies and states. These hurdles collectively contribute to the extended waiting period for farmers seeking their rightful compensation. Out of the pendency of claims, the maximum was in Rajasthan (Rs.1,378.34 crore), followed by Maharashtra (Rs.336.22 crore), Gujarat (Rs.258.87 crore), Karnataka (Rs.132.25 crore) and Jharkhand (Rs.128.24 crore).

Telangana launched Gruha Lakshmi Scheme 2023, Check Benefits and Apply online

The Telangana government is set to launch the Gruha Lakshmi scheme in 2023, a financial assistance program for women from SC, ST, and BC communities to help them build or improve their homes. The scheme will provide each beneficiary with a one-time grant of Rs. 3 lakh. The Gruha Lakshmi scheme is part of the Telangana government's efforts to empower women and provide them with access to affordable housing. The scheme is expected to benefit over 1 lakh women in the state. Women who are interested in applying for the Gruha Lakshmi scheme can do so online or at the nearest district collectorate office. The application process will begin in early 2023. The Gruha Lakshmi scheme is a welcome initiative by the Telangana government. It will help to improve the lives of many women in the state and provide them with a sense of security and stability. The scheme is also expected to boost the state's economy by creating jobs in the construction sector.

Rajasthan government gives free smartphones to women: How to register, criteria and more

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot of Rajasthan has launched the "Indira Gandhi Free Smartphone Yojana 2023." This program provides free mobile phones, internet, and voice call services to women in the state. The distribution of smartphones will take place from August 10 to August 30, 2023, prioritizing widows and divorced women.

Women meeting the criteria can benefit from the scheme if they fall under the following categories:

School Students: Female students in grades 9 to 12 in government schools.

Higher Education: Female students in government higher education colleges.

Widows and Single Women: Those receiving government pensions.

Employment Guarantee Schemes: Women completing 100 days under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee or 50 days under the Indira Gandhi Urban Employment Guarantee.

PM Vishwakarma Scheme: Benefits and Eligibility

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent announcement of the Vishwakarma Yojana in his Independence Day address has paved the way for a new scheme. The Vishwakarma Yojana is a visionary initiative by the Indian government designed to extend financial assistance to individuals engaged in traditional crafts and skills. This scheme seeks to provide a strong support system to artisans, enabling them to flourish in their crafts while also contributing to the preservation of India's rich cultural heritage. It is aimed at bolstering the livelihood prospects of traditional artisans and craftspeople. Following this announcement, the Union Cabinet swiftly approved the scheme, demonstrating its commitment to promoting and preserving traditional skills and crafts. Under the umbrella of the Vishwakarma Yojana, a dedicated allocation of Rs 13,000 crore has been earmarked to empower artisans across the country. The scheme offers subsidized loans of up to Rs 2 lakh to craftsmen, aiming to alleviate financial constraints that might impede their artistic pursuits.

DGCA forms panel to suggest ways to ensure gender equality

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in India has taken a proactive step towards promoting gender equality within the nation's aviation sector. On August 10, 2023, the DGCA established a four-member committee composed of senior officers to devise strategies and recommendations aimed at achieving gender parity in the industry. The committee's objective is to propose actionable measures that the DGCA can implement to foster gender equality in the aviation sector. The committee is tasked with formulating norms and guidelines that will facilitate gender equality within the aviation sector. These norms will subsequently be shared with aviation stakeholders, encouraging them to adopt and integrate these practices into their operations. The intention is to create a more inclusive and balanced work environment.

Pradhan Mantri Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA) In News

The Ministry of Education has introduced the Pradhan Mantri Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (PM-USHA), a central scheme aimed at enhancing access, equity, and excellence in higher education across States and Union Territories. However, the requirement for implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and adopting certain academic criteria to avail funds has sparked controversy, making the scheme seem exclusivist. The PM-USHA scheme aims to provide financial support to States for improving their higher education systems. As per the guidelines released in June, States and Union Territories must sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Department of Higher Education, committing to implement NEP 2020 and adopt guidelines for the National Credit Framework and Choice Based Credit System for Four Year Undergraduate Programme. These conditions serve as prerequisites for accessing the ₹12,926.10 crore allocated between 2023-24 and 2025-26, despite the requirement for 40% funding contribution from State governments.

'Lakhpadi Didi' Scheme: Govt Planning Skill Training For 2 Crore Women

In a significant move to empower women and foster economic growth, the Indian government has announced the 'Lakhpadi Didi' scheme, aiming to provide skill training to two crore women across the nation. The scheme, previously implemented in select states, now seeks to expand its reach and impact on a national scale. During his recent Independence Day address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi outlined his ambitious vision of cultivating two crore 'lakhpadi didis' (women millionaires) in rural areas. Drawing attention to the vital roles played by women such as 'bank-wali didi' (banking sisters), 'Anganwadi didi' (childcare sisters), and 'dawai-wali didi' (medical sisters), he underscored the need to elevate women's economic standing. The 'Lakhpadi Didi' scheme is designed to empower women by equipping them with essential skills that pave the way for the establishment of micro-enterprises. A senior official shared that the scheme's core objective is to train two crore women, thereby encouraging them to initiate and manage small-scale businesses effectively.

Cabinet Approves ₹14,903 Crore Extension of Digital India Project: Its Objectives and Allocations

In a significant development, the cabinet has given its nod to the extension of the Digital India project, allocating a substantial budget of ₹14,903 crore. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced this decision, highlighting that the extended initiative will build upon the achievements of its previous iteration. Under the ambit of this extended Digital India project, several crucial objectives have been outlined, each aimed at bolstering India's technological capabilities: IT Professional Upskilling, IT Training, Expansion of Supercomputing Infrastructure, Digital Empowerment for Enterprises, Information Security Training, Cyber Awareness for Students, Enhancement of Cyber Forensics, Strengthening National Knowledge Network, AI Center of Excellence, Cyber Security Advancements, Startup Support in Tier 2 and 3 Cities.

Maharashtra Government Launches Bhagwan Birsa Munda Jodaraste Scheme to Connect Tribal Villages with Main Roads

The Maharashtra government has taken a significant step towards enhancing connectivity and improving the lives of tribal communities in the state. The Bhagwan Birsa Munda Jodaraste Scheme aims to link all tribal villages in 17 districts of Maharashtra with main roads, effectively addressing the challenges faced by these communities in accessing essential services. The project, estimated at a cost of Rs 5,000 crore, will involve the construction of approximately 6,838 kilometers of roads. The Bhagwan Birsa Munda Jodaraste Scheme has been initiated by the Maharashtra government to connect tribal villages with primary roads, promoting better accessibility and improved living conditions. The scheme is an outcome of the Budget Session announcement by Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Devendra Fadnavis, focusing on the establishment of perennial roads to connect tribal padas (hamlets).

Jan Dhan Accounts Cross 50 Crore-Mark In Less Than 9 Years: Centre

In an impressive achievement, the total number of Jan Dhan accounts in India has crossed the significant 50 crore mark within a span of fewer than 9 years. This successful initiative has brought about substantial changes in the nation's financial landscape, according to an official statement from the finance ministry. Diverse Ownership: Out of the total Jan Dhan accounts, an encouraging 56 percent are owned by women, indicating a remarkable step towards gender inclusivity in financial matters. Rural and Semi-Urban Embrace: Around 67 percent of these accounts have been opened in rural and semi-urban areas, showcasing the program's widespread reach and positive impact in less urbanized regions. Substantial Deposits: The cumulative deposits in these Jan Dhan accounts have surged beyond ₹2.03 lakh crore, underlining the financial engagement and empowerment of a significant portion of the population. Average Balance: On average, the balance held in each Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) account amounts to ₹4,076, revealing a tangible impact on individuals' savings and financial stability.

'Mera Bill Mera Adhikar' GST Reward Scheme To Launch Soon

In a significant move towards enhancing transparency in financial transactions and empowering consumers, the Indian government is set to launch the 'Mera Bill Mera Adhikar' invoice incentive scheme. This pioneering scheme, scheduled to commence from September 1, aims to promote the habit of requesting bills during purchases, thereby fostering a culture of fiscal responsibility and accountability. The 'Mera Bill Mera Adhikar' scheme, conceptualized by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), is designed to instill a sense of confidence and assurance among consumers while making purchases. The scheme is geared towards creating awareness about the importance of receiving genuine invoices for business-to-consumer transactions, fostering a more transparent economy. Under this scheme, consumers are offered a compelling incentive to demand bills for their purchases. The range of cash prizes extends from ₹10,000 to a whopping ₹1 crore. These prizes will be awarded through monthly and quarterly draws, making participation exciting and rewarding. The scheme's architecture ensures that individuals stand a chance to win substantial cash rewards by simply requesting legitimate invoices during their transactions.

North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS) with an approved outlay of Rs.8139.50 crore

On August 21, 2023, the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region announced the continuation of the North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS) with an approved budget of Rs. 8139.50 crore for the period 2022-2023 to 2025-2026. This initiative aims to bolster infrastructure development, particularly in connectivity and social sectors, within the North Eastern States. This segment focuses on improving road infrastructure across the North Eastern States. It incorporates the merger of the erstwhile North East Road Sector Development Scheme (NERSDS). The funding for this component is fully borne by the central government. The objective is to enhance road connectivity and accessibility within the region.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) Completes Nine Years Of Successful Implementation

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) – the National Mission for Financial Inclusion – completes nine years of successful implementation. Launched on 28th August 2014 by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the PMJDY stands as one of the most extensive financial inclusion initiatives globally, aimed at liberating the economically marginalized from a cycle of poverty. The Ministry of Finance, through the PMJDY, has been committed to fostering financial inclusiveness and providing support to economically disadvantaged sections. Financial Inclusion (FI) is a means of ensuring equitable growth and delivering financial services at reasonable costs to vulnerable groups, particularly those lacking access to basic banking services. One of the essential outcomes of financial inclusion is the integration of the poor's savings into the

formal financial system, detaching them from exploitative moneylenders. Additionally, it facilitates the transfer of funds to families in rural areas, thus furthering the economic empowerment of these individuals.

Summits & Conference News**Russia-Africa Economic and Humanitarian Summits**

On July 27–28, 2023, St. Petersburg, Russia, hosted the Second Summit of Russia–Africa Economic and Humanitarian Forum, a momentous occasion that showcased the growing relations between Russia and the countries of the African continent. This summit marked the second time such events of this magnitude were held, indicating the significance and commitment of both parties towards fostering stronger ties and cooperation. The discussions during the summit were centered around the vision of jointly building a new, fairer multipolar architecture for the world order. Participants stressed the importance of a world order that upholds sovereign equality among states and promotes mutually beneficial cooperation.

India to host World Coffee Conference in Bengaluru from Sept 25

India is set to host the 5th World Coffee Conference (WCC) in Bengaluru from September 25 to 28, where it will present its diverse coffees to buyers from over 80 countries. This is the first time that the event will be held in Asia. The conference aims to create pathways for innovative opportunities and markets, with a special emphasis on benefiting coffee farmers who play a crucial role in the coffee production chain. The central theme of the event will be "Sustainability through Circular Economy and Regenerative Agriculture" The event will encompass various activities, including conferences, exhibitions, skill-building workshops, a CEOs & global leaders forum, and a growers conclave. Participants from over 80 countries are anticipated to take part in WCC 2023. The International Coffee Organisation (ICO) and the Coffee Board of India will co-organize the event. The ICO functions as the primary intergovernmental organization dedicated to promoting coffee trade and fostering cooperation among coffee-producing and consuming nations. Furthermore, the event will feature tennis player Rohan Bopanna, who has been appointed as its brand ambassador.

Bengali

MISSION

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Start Date: 29 Sept 2023

Lt Governor Inaugurates 9th India International MSME Expo & Summit 2023

Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha of Jammu and Kashmir commenced the 9th India International MSME Expo and Summit 2023 in New Delhi. This prestigious gathering, organized by the MSME Development Forum, served as a platform to foster collaboration between policymakers and entrepreneurs in the Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector, driving forward the nation's economic growth. Shri Manoj Sinha personally visited booths set up by MSMEs and various stakeholders. This gave him a direct experience of the indigenous products and inventive spirit originating from the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. Micro & Small enterprises play a crucial part in driving socio-economic transformation, especially for women entrepreneurs. In Jammu and Kashmir, over 74,000 SMEs are under the leadership of women, highlighting the empowerment and transformative influence these enterprises bring.

PM Modi to attend BRICS Summit in S. Africa this month

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has confirmed his attendance at the BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, from August 22 to 24, 2023. This comes after Russian President Vladimir Putin canceled his visit to the same event. The summit gains significance due to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine and discussions on expanding the membership of BRICS, a topic of interest to both Russia and China.

Traditional Medicine Global Summit To Be Held In Gandhinagar On Aug 17, 18

The first WHO Traditional Medicine Global Summit is set to unfold on August 17 and 18, 2023, in the city of Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India. This event will intertwine with the G20 health ministerial meeting, creating a dynamic platform aimed at galvanizing both political commitment and evidence-based actions in the realm of traditional medicine. This age-old practice serves as the initial recourse for millions across the globe, catering to their diverse health and well-being requisites. The Global Summit will be jointly orchestrated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Government of India, which presently holds the esteemed presidency of the G20 for the year 2023. As an inclusive stage, the Summit will convene an array of stakeholders encompassing traditional medicine practitioners, users, communities, national policymakers, international organizations, academia, private sector representatives, and civil society entities. Together, they will share pearls of wisdom, groundbreaking evidence, transformative data, and pioneering innovations that underscore the indispensable role of traditional medicine in both health and sustainable development.

BRICS Welcomes New Members: Inclusion of Argentina, Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, and Egypt

In a significant geopolitical development, the BRICS alliance, comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, has announced the inclusion of six new member countries. This expansion marks a notable shift in the alliance's composition and has the potential to reshape the dynamics of global cooperation. President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa, the host nation of the recent BRICS summit, made a historic announcement on August 24th, revealing the names of the new entrants to the alliance. The expanded BRICS now welcomes Argentina, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia, and Egypt into its fold. This move not only diversifies the alliance but also provides a platform for emerging economies from different regions to align their interests on the global stage.

Panel Formed For 'Restructuring And Redefining' Role Of DRDO

The Ministry of Defence in India has taken a significant decision to undertake a comprehensive revamp of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). Long recognized for its delayed projects and cost overruns, the DRDO is now set to undergo a transformation to enhance its technological advancements beyond the missile program. This initiative comes after persistent concerns expressed by various stakeholders, including the armed services, regarding the organization's efficiency and effectiveness. To spearhead this transformation, a nine-member committee has been formed, bringing together experts from the defence sector, industry, and academia. The committee's task is to restructure and redefine the DRDO's role, foster collaborations with foreign entities, attract and retain top-tier talent, and streamline its research efforts. The newly appointed committee will be led by K. Vijay Raghavan, former Principal Scientific Advisor to the government.

BRICS Summit 2023 in South Africa

Leaders from the BRICS economic alliance, consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, are converging in the bustling financial district of Sandton, Johannesburg, for a highly anticipated three-day summit. This gathering marks a pivotal moment in international diplomacy as discussions unfold regarding the consolidation of political and economic influence within the developing world. The summit is set to witness extensive deliberations on strategies aimed at bolstering the collective political and economic clout of the BRICS alliance. Notably, China's President Xi Jinping's active participation reaffirms China's deep-rooted commitment to the BRICS alliance as a crucial instrument for advancing its strategic ambitions on the global stage. Russian President Vladimir Putin's involvement takes an innovative turn as he joins the summit via video link. This unconventional approach is a direct response to an International Criminal Court arrest warrant issued against him in relation to the Ukrainian conflict. Despite the warrant, Russia maintains its engagement in the summit, demonstrating the enduring importance of the BRICS alliance.

Ministry Of Education Announces Launch Of Smart India Hackathon-2023

In a stride towards nurturing innovation and collaborative problem-solving, the Ministry of Education’s Innovation Cell and the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE) have unveiled the much-anticipated sixth edition of the Smart India Hackathon (SIH) 2023. This landmark event continues to be a testament to the growing spirit of innovation in India’s educational landscape. The Smart India Hackathon acts as a remarkable platform that unites the ingenuity of India’s young minds with the practical obstacles encountered by diverse government entities and ministries. With a vast network comprising more than 7500 Innovation Institutes spanning the nation, SIH is a breeding ground for unconventional solutions and fresh perspectives. Since its establishment in 2017, the initiation of the Smart India Hackathon has marked a significant milestone. It has evolved into a global exemplar of a Hackathon and innovation framework, embodying its dynamic progression over time. The array of themes embraced by this Hackathon reflects its diversity, spanning from agriculture and health tech to transportation and even extending beyond these domains.

India Officially Hands Over B20 Presidency to Brazil to Host G20 Summit in 2024

In a significant development for global business and economic collaboration, India has gracefully handed over the B20 presidency to Brazil, making the transition towards the G20 summit in 2024. The B20, a group representing the business community at the G20 summit, played a pivotal role under India’s leadership in shaping policies and fostering discussions on a range of critical global challenges. Led by N. Chandrasekaran, the B20 chaired by India, the presidency focused on the theme of “Vasudeva Katumbakam”- One Earth, One Family, One Future. The three day B20 summit, hosted by India from 25th August to 27th August, was characterized by the theme “R.A.I.S.E.”- Responsible, Accelerated, Innovative, Sustainable and Equitable Business. This theme summarises the core ideals that the B20 aims to propagate and prioritize. The summit brought together over 1,500 delegates representing approximately 55 countries, creating an atmosphere conducive to insightful discussions and multifaceted deliberations.

Awards & Honors News

PM conferred Lokmanya Tilak National Award in Pune

The Lokmanya Tilak National Award was granted to the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, in Pune, Maharashtra, during a ceremony that commemorated the 103rd death anniversary of Lokmanya Tilak. The prestigious award, instituted by the Tilak Smarak Mandir Trust in 1983, aims to honor the lasting legacy of Lokmanya Tilak. Shri Narendra Modi became the 41st distinguished individual to receive this esteemed recognition. The previous year saw the presentation of the Lokmanya Tilak National Award to Tessa Thomas, a renowned senior scientist often referred to as India’s “missile woman.” Ms. Thomas played a crucial role as the project director for Agni-4 and Agni-5 missile systems, contributing significantly to the nation’s defense capabilities.

Name	Position/Title	Year of Award
Indira Gandhi	Former Prime Minister	-
Atal Bihari Vajpayee	Former Prime Minister	1994
Dr Manmohan Singh	Former Prime Minister	1997
Rahul Bajaj	Chairperson of the Bajaj Group	2000
Pranab Mukherjee	Former President	2009
Sharad Pawar	Founder of Nationalist Congress Party	2016
Cyrus S. Poonawalla	Chairman of Cyrus Poonawalla Group	2021

Subhash Runwal receives the Lifetime Achievement Award RICS

Subhash Runwal, Chairman of Runwal, a leading real estate developer with a legacy of over four decades, has been recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the first-ever RICS South Asia Awards. RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) is a global industry body representing professionals across the country. Hosting its first-ever awards, it aimed to recognize global and Indian industry-leading achievements and demonstrate the upholding of the highest standards of professionalism and ethics by individuals and teams across built and natural environments. This recognition is a testimony to Runwal’s exceptional contributions, outstanding achievements, and unwavering dedication to the real estate sector.

President Droupadi Murmu approves 76 Gallantry awards

President Smt Droupadi Murmu has given her approval for 76 Gallantry awards to members of the Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces on the occasion of Independence Day 2023. Among these honors are four Kirti Chakra awards (awarded posthumously), 11 Shaurya Chakra awards (including five posthumous), two Bar to Sena Medals (Gallantry), 52 Sena Medals (Gallantry), three Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry), and four Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry). Additionally, the President has sanctioned 30 Mention-in-Despatches awards to Army personnel, including a posthumous award for Army dog Madhu, and one for an Air Force member. These recognitions acknowledge their significant contributions in various military operations, such as Operation Rakshak, Operation Snow Leopard, Operation Casualty Evacuation, Operation Mount Chomo, Operation Pangsau Pass, Operation Meghdoot, Operation Orchid, Operation Kalisham Valley, Rescue Operation, and Operation Evacuation.

PM Modi honoured with Greece's Grand Cross of the Order of Honour

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with the Grand Cross of the Order of Honour by Greek President Katerina N. Sakellaropoulou in Athens. The award is the highest civilian honour that can be bestowed by Greece to a foreign head of government. The citation for the award said that it was being given to PM Modi "in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the promotion of bilateral relations between Greece and India". It also praised his "commitment to strengthening the ties between the two countries in the political, economic, cultural and people-to-people spheres". PM Modi is the first Indian prime minister to be conferred with the Grand Cross of the Order of Honour. He is also the first foreign head of government to be awarded the honour since 2017. The award is a significant recognition of PM Modi's efforts to strengthen ties between India and Greece. The two countries have a long history of friendship and cooperation, and the award is a testament to the growing importance of this relationship.

SVAMITVA Scheme Of Ministry Of Panchayati Raj Won National Award For E-Governance 2023

The SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) Scheme, initiated by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, has been honored with the prestigious National Award for e-Governance 2023 (Gold) in recognition of its groundbreaking application of emerging technologies to deliver citizen-centric services. The accolade was presented during the 26th National Conference on e-Governance (NCEG) held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Government of India. The two-day National Conference on e-Governance (NCEG) was jointly organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh. The event, themed "Viksit Bharat, Empowering Citizens," aimed to facilitate discussions on cutting-edge technologies, effective e-Governance strategies, and knowledge sharing among various stakeholders. The conference, held at the Brilliant Convention Centre in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, served as a vital platform for brainstorming and exchanging insights on the latest technologies driving e-Governance initiatives.

Rajasthan's Priyan Sain Crowned Miss Earth India 2023

Priyan Sain clinched the title of Miss Earth India 2023 during the Miss Divine Beauty 2023 national final held on August 26 in New Delhi. The 20-year-old student, dancer, and taekwondo player from Jaipur, Rajasthan succeeds last year's winner Vanshika Parmar, and will now prepare to represent India at the Miss Earth 2023 pageant in Vietnam this December. She received her crown from reigning Miss Earth

from Korea Mina Sue Choi who was invited as a special guest along with Miss Earth Air from Australia Sheridan Mortlock. At the same event, Praveena Aanjna was named Miss International India 2023 while Pema Choden Bhutia and Tejaswini Shrivastava were both announced as runners-up. Prior to becoming a finalist for Miss Divine Beauty and eventually winning her national title, Priyan participated in Miss Rajasthan 2022 where she finished as first runner-up.

Important Dates News

World Lung Cancer Day 2023: Date, Significance and History

World Lung Cancer Day is observed every year on August 1 and it has been celebrated on the same date since 2012. It was first marked to raise awareness around the deadly disease and encourage more research on it to break the stigma around the disease. The theme for world lung cancer day 2023 has not been disclosed yet. The campaign for World Lung Cancer Day was recognized in the year 2012 though the momentum was set in the preceding years. The Forum of International Respiratory Societies organized the campaign in collaboration with the International Association for the Study of Lung Cancer and the American College of Chest Physicians. The awareness around lung cancer picked pace since then and people got more aware of the signs and symptoms that they must look for in case of lung cancer. The statistics in India hint that the cases of cancer cases may grow from 1.46 million in 2022 to 1.57 million in 2025. Lung and breast cancers in males and females are considered the leading types of cancers.

National Handloom Day 2023: Date, Significance and History

The Indian government has chosen August 7 as the annual National Handloom Day, with the key objective of fostering the handloom industry and acknowledging the dedication and expertise of the weaving community. This sector's artisans, weavers, and producers have been instrumental in safeguarding the rich cultural and traditional legacy of the nation. Additionally, the occasion aims to enhance the visibility and economic well-being of craftsmen and weavers by encouraging their active participation and support. This year nation celebrates 9th National Handloom Day.

India observes 3rd 'Javelin Throw Day' on August 07, 2023

On August 7th, a remarkable chapter in Indian athletics history was etched into the annals of time. The Athletics Federation of India, the apex governing body for athletics in the nation, made a resounding decision to mark this day as National Javelin Day. This auspicious occasion is dedicated to celebrating the awe-inspiring achievement of Neeraj Chopra, a true champion who made an indelible mark on the global stage. This year nations observed 3rd Javelin Throw Day.

Hiroshima Day 2023: Date, Background and Significance

On 6th August 1945, the world witnessed the most devastating events in human history when the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. This act resulted in the loss of thousands of innocent lives and forever altered the course of humanity. Since, then August 6th has been observed as Hiroshima Day, a solemn occasion to commemorate the victims and reflect on the horrors of nuclear warfare. 6th August 2023, 78th Hiroshima Day, holds a significant position in the history. Hiroshima, a city of cultural significance, was instantly transformed into a haunting landscape of death and destruction in the blink of an eye. The atomic bomb, named 'Little Boy', killed an estimated 140,000 people by the end of 1945, either directly or through the subsequent effects of radiation. Most of the people suffered severe injuries and the survivors endured lifelong health issues.

Quit India Movement: Date, History and Significance

The Quit India Movement was a historic event in India's struggle for Independence from British colonial rule. The year 2023 marks the 81st anniversary of this momentous movement that changed the course of India's history. As we commemorate this significant milestone, it is essential to reflect the ideals and sacrifices of the past, drawing inspiration for the present and the future. The Quit India Movement, also known as the August Movement, was initiated by the Indian National Congress on 8th August, 1942, led by Mahatma Gandhi, who called for "Do or Die" in the struggle for India's independence. The primary objective of the Quit India Movement was to achieve immediate and complete independence from British colonial rule. It demanded to end the control of British over India and establish a sovereign and self-governing nation. The Quit India Movement adapted the principles of civil disobedience and non-violence, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of Satyagraha. The hallmarks of this movement were peaceful protests, non-cooperation and non-violent resistance.

World Nagasaki Day 2023: Date, Significance and History

Nagasaki Day, observed annually on August 9th, holds a somber significance in global history. It marks the day when the Japanese city of Nagasaki was devastated by an atomic bomb during World War II. This day serves as a reminder of the immense destructive power of nuclear weapons and the need for lasting peace.

The First Atomic Bomb: Hiroshima, another Japanese city, became the first target of an atomic bomb on August 6, 1945. The destruction caused by the bomb prompted global shock and horror, leading to calls for Japan's surrender.

The Fateful Day: On August 9, 1945, a second atomic bomb, codenamed "Fat Man," was dropped on Nagasaki. The bomb detonated above the city, causing widespread devastation and loss of life.

Immediate Impact: The explosion obliterated large parts of Nagasaki, instantly killing tens of thousands of people. The intense heat and radiation unleashed by the bomb inflicted severe burns and injuries on survivors.

Long-Term Consequences: The survivors of the Nagasaki bombing, known as "hibakusha," faced enduring health issues due to radiation exposure, including cancers, birth defects, and other ailments. The city itself suffered from extensive damage, leading to economic and social challenges.

World Lion Day 2023: Date, Significance and History

Every year on August 10th, people worldwide commemorate World Lion Day. This global observance aims to increase understanding about the conservation and safeguarding of lions. It provides an opportunity to inform individuals about the difficulties these magnificent animals encounter across the globe and to endorse initiatives for their preservation. Additionally, the day is a chance to honor these grandiose felines, recognizing their importance in ecosystems and various cultures globally. World Lion Day plays a vital role in rallying support and action to ensure a future for these remarkable animals in the wild by shining a spotlight on lions and their conservation needs. There is an urgent need for their conservation hence, the day aims to educate people about the importance of lions in ecosystems and their cultural significance.

World Biofuel Day 2023 Observed Globally On 10 August

World Biofuel Day is observed every year on 10th August to create awareness about the importance of non-fossil fuels as an alternative to conventional fossil fuels and to highlight the various efforts made by the Government in the biofuel sector. This day also honors the research experiments by Sir Rudolf Diesel who ran an engine with peanut oil in the year 1893. His research experiment had predicted that vegetable oil is going to replace fossil fuels in the next century to fuel different mechanical engines. The World Biofuel Day is being observed by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas since 2015.

World Steelpan Day 2023: Date, Significance and History

On July 24th, a significant step is anticipated as the United Nations prepares to adopt a draft resolution. This resolution will declare August 11th as World Steelpan Day, to be celebrated annually on the UN's calendar. Let's delve into the fascinating history and cultural importance of the steelpan, an instrument that emerged from the heart of Trinidad and Tobago. On August 11th, the world will resonate with the joyful notes of the steelpan, echoing the vibrant history of Trinidad and Tobago. World Steelpan Day stands not only as a celebration of music but also as a tribute to the resilient spirit of cultural diversity and sustainable development.

World Elephant Day 2023: Date, Significance and History

World Elephant Day, observed globally on August 12, is a significant event dedicated to raising awareness about the pressing challenges faced by elephants and advocating for their protection and conservation. This observance serves as a vital platform to highlight issues such as habitat loss, ivory poaching, human-elephant conflicts, and the urgent need for improved conservation efforts. This occasion aims to promote the importance of safeguarding these magnificent creatures for future generations and to encourage actions that contribute to their welfare and survival. It's a day to appreciate the vital role elephants play in maintaining ecosystems, as well as to support organizations and initiatives that work towards their preservation. From date to history here is everything you need to know about this day.

International Youth Day 2023: Date, Significance, and History

Every year, on the 12th of August, the global community comes together to celebrate International Youth Day. This annual occasion serves as a dedicated day of awareness and action, recognized by the United Nations (UN), to address pertinent issues affecting the world's youth population. The significance of International Youth Day, observed annually on August 12, transcends mere symbolism. This occasion provides a platform to acknowledge and honor the inherent qualities of youth, recognizing their potential to shape the destiny of nations and the entire world. Simultaneously, the day serves as a poignant reminder of the hurdles that young individuals face. It emphasizes concerted efforts to alleviate these challenges.

77th Indian Independence Day 2023: Date, Celebrations, Theme and History

India celebrating their 77th Independence Day on August 15, 2023. The theme for this year's celebration is "Nation First, Always First". This theme is in line with the government's focus on national unity and development. The day begins with the hoisting of the national flag at the Red Fort in Delhi by the Prime Minister. This followed by a military parade and a cultural program. There will also be flag hoisting ceremonies and cultural programs all over the country. The 77th Independence Day is a significant milestone for India. It is a time to reflect on the country's journey since independence and to recommit to the values of freedom, democracy, and equality. It is also a time to celebrate the diversity and unity of the Indian nation.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee's Death Anniversary

As the nation observed the solemn occasion of the death anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on 16th August, leaders from various political backgrounds and affiliations converged at the 'Sadaiv Atal' memorial in Delhi. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, Rajya Sabha Deputy

Chairman Harivansh, Praful Patel, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Minister, Anupriya Patel and HAM's Jitan Ram also paid tribute to the Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his 5th death anniversary. Former PM Atal Bihari's foster daughter Namita Kaur Bhattacharya pays floral tribute at 'Saidav Atal' on his death anniversary. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accompanied by President Droupadi Murmu, paid his respects at the memorial. PM Modi's tribute extended beyond the physical act, he tweeted on X, "I join the 140 crore people of India in paying homage to the remarkable Atal Ji on his Punya Tithi. India benefitted greatly from his leadership. He played a pivotal role in boosting our nation's progress and in taking it to the 21st century in a wide range of sectors."

Parsi New Year 2023: Date, History and Significance

The Parsi New Year, also referred to as Navroz or Nowruz, is a joyous occasion celebrated between July and August, this year Parsi New Year marked on 16th August. Rooted in the Persian words 'Nav and 'Roz', which means 'new day', this cherished festival has a rich history spanning over 3,000 years. While the global celebration of Navroz aligns with the Spring Equinox on March 21, the Parsi community in India follows the Shahenshahi calendar. This unique calendar doesn't consider leap years, resulting in a shift of celebration by 200 days from the original date. The festival roots are linked to Zoroastrianism, which is among the world's oldest beliefs in one god. It started more than 3,500 years ago in ancient Iran when a wise person named Prophet Zarathustra shared this faith. The happiness of Zoroastrianism lasted until 1,400 years ago when a religion called Islam started spreading in the 7th century. Because of this change, many Zoroastrianism left their homes in Iran and went to India and Pakistan. In these new places, a group called Parsis formed and found safety. The celebration's origin story harks back to the legendary king Jamshed, who saved the world from a catastrophic winter that threatened annihilation.

World Photography Day 2023: Date, Celebration, Significance and History

World Photography Day, observed annually on August 19, marks the celebration of photography's rich history and its role as both an art form and a scientific achievement. This day commemorates the invention of the daguerreotype, an early photographic process developed by Louis Daguerre in 1837, which paved the way for modern photography. World Photography Day highlights photography as a legitimate form of art, encouraging photographers to experiment with different techniques, compositions and styles. It encourages people to appreciate the power of photography in telling stories, capturing emotions and preserving memories. It is a day to discuss the technical aspects of photography, advancements in equipment and the evolution of photographic techniques when photographers and enthusiasts often share their favourite photos, stories behind the images and insights into their creative process.

World Senior Citizen Day 2023: Date, Significance and History

World Senior Citizen Day is celebrated on August 21 every year to raise awareness of the contributions of older adults to society. In India, a senior citizen means any person who has attained the age of sixty years or above. In a more general sense, senior citizens are elderly people, especially those who have retired. This day is celebrated to recognise the wisdom, knowledge, and accomplishments of older individuals while raising awareness about the issues they face and advocating for their well-being. The significance of World Senior Citizen Day is twofold. First, it is a day to honor the contributions of senior citizens to society. Senior citizens have made significant contributions in all areas of life, from raising families and building businesses to serving in the military and leading governments. They have also passed on their wisdom and knowledge to younger generations, helping to shape the world we live in today. Second, World Senior Citizen Day is a day to raise awareness about the issues faced by senior citizens. As the population ages, the number of senior citizens is increasing. This is putting a strain on resources, such as healthcare and housing. Senior citizens are also more likely to be victims of crime and abuse. World Senior Citizen Day is an opportunity to raise awareness about these issues and to advocate for policies that will improve the lives of senior citizens.

International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism 2023

The International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism is observed annually on August 21. This is the sixth commemoration of the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism, on 21 August 2023. The International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism was established by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 72/165 of 20 December 2017. The resolution was adopted by consensus, reflecting the strong international commitment to combating terrorism and supporting its victims. The day was chosen to commemorate the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq, on August 21, 2003, which killed 22 people, including Sergio Vieira de Mello, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

World Water Week 2023: Date, Theme, Significance and History

World Water Week is a global event which is organised by the Stockholm International Water Institute every year since 1991. The programme will be held from August 20 to 24 at the Waterfront Congress Center. It is a non-profit event which aims to develop solutions for the international water crisis

(alongside several other problems). Water is one of the most essential gifts of nature that we require in our daily lives. From drinking to cleaning, water serves multiple purposes in our lives. Hence, it becomes equally important for us to conserve it. The theme, Seeds of Change.

Women's Equality Day 2023: Date, Theme, Significance and History

Women's Equality Day, observed annually on August 26, marks a global recognition of the ongoing struggle for equal rights and opportunities for women. It serves as a tribute to the universal suffrage movement, celebrates women's advancements, and reinforces the commitment to gender equality. The theme for Women's Equality Day 2023 is "Embrace Equity," echoing through the strategic plan spanning from 2021 to 2026. This theme underscores the importance of achieving gender equality, not just for economic growth, but also as a fundamental human right.

International Dog Day 2023: Date, Significance, Celebration and History

International Dog Day, observed on August 26th every year, is a heartwarming tribute to our furry companions who enrich our lives with their unwavering devotion and boundless affection. This day holds a special place in the hearts of animal lovers worldwide, as it acknowledges the profound impact that dogs have on our lives, from their incredible abilities to their role in rescue operations, and, most importantly, their capacity for unconditional love. Dogs, often referred to as "man's best friend," occupy a unique place in our hearts and homes. Their unwavering loyalty and boundless love create an unbreakable bond that transcends words. Beyond companionship, dogs play pivotal roles in various aspects of human life.

National Sports Day 2023: Date, Theme, Significance and History

The National Sports Day in India is celebrated on 29 August 2023. This annual observance, held on August 29 in India, is a tribute to the enduring legacy of Major Dhyan Chand. The day also serves as a reminder for all of us to recall the contributions, determination and extraordinary achievements of the athletes and their influence in shaping societies. The theme of National Sports Day 2023 is not known yet. However, people can celebrate the day using #NationalSportsDay on social media posts. National Sports Day is also an occasion to raise awareness about the importance of sports and physical activity in our daily lives. Sports can help us stay fit and healthy, reduce stress, and build character. They can also teach us teamwork, discipline, and perseverance.

International Whale Shark Day 2023: Date, Significance and History

International Whale Shark Day is celebrated every year on August 30 to raise awareness about the plight of whale sharks, the largest fish in the world. Whale sharks are filter feeders and do not pose a threat to humans. However, they are vulnerable to overfishing, habitat loss, and boat strikes. The significance of International Whale Shark Day 2023 is to raise awareness about the plight of whale sharks, the largest fish in the world. Whale sharks are filter feeders and do not pose a threat to humans. However, they are vulnerable to overfishing, habitat loss, and boat strikes. The International Whale Shark Day was first commemorated in 2008 at the International Whale Shark Conference in Isla Holbox. The conference hosted 40 ocean experts, activists, and scientists who had a concern for the whale shark’s declining population. While said sharks have been around for more than 240 to 260 million years, it wasn’t until the 1820s that the whale shark was first discovered off the coast of South Africa. Dr. Andrew Smith rightfully described the fish as the largest shark to exist on earth.

World Sanskrit Day 2023: Date, Celebration, Significance and History

World Sanskrit Day, also referred to as International Sanskrit Day, Sanskrit Diwas and Vishwa Samskrita Dinam is observed on the day of Shravana Poornima in the Hindu calendar, which is also marked as Raksha Bandhan, which coincides with the moon. This year we will be celebrating Sanskrit Diwas on Thursday, 31st August. The purpose of this day is to raise awareness and promote Sanskrit, one of India’s oldest languages. Sanskrit holds importance as it serves as the foundation, for classical texts in disciplines such, as Literature, Philosophy, Mathematics and Science.

Sports News

F1 defending champion Max Verstappen wins Belgian Grand Prix

Defending Formula One champion Max Verstappen emphatically won the Belgian Grand Prix for an eighth straight win and 10th overall of a crushingly dominant season. He finished 22.3 seconds ahead of teammate Sergio Perez to give Red Bull and easy 1-2. It moved Verstappen ominously closer to a third straight world title and his own F1 record of 15 wins from last year. Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc finished in third spot for a third podium of the season, with Lewis Hamilton in fourth for Mercedes ahead of Aston Martin’s Fernando Alonso. George Russell was sixth for Mercedes, with Lando Norris (McLaren), Esteban Ocon (Alpine), Lance Stroll (Aston Martin), and Yuki Tsunoda (AlphaTauri) completing the top 10.

Previous race’s winners list:

Race	Winner
Hungarian Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen
British Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen
Canadian Grand Prix	Max Verstappen
Spanish Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen
Monaco Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen
Bahrain Grand Prix 2023	Max Verstappen
Saudi Arabia Grand Prix 2023	Sergio Pérez
Azerbaijan Grand Prix 2023	Sergio Pérez

Moeen Ali confirms his Retirement from Test Cricket after Ashes 2023

England all-rounder Moeen Ali confirms his test cricket retirement after the end of the Ashes series and he will play in other formats of cricket. On the request of England Test captain BenStokes, he played the Ashes series. But he retired from test cricket in September 2021. He played for England in 68 test matches taking 204 wickets and scored 3094 runs. He was awarded the Order of the British Empire(OBE) in June 2023 for his services to cricket. Australia cricket team retained the 5 match test series ‘Ashes 2023’ after the 2-2 draw against England. It was held from 16th June to 31st July in the United Kingdom(UK). This marks Australia’s 4th consecutive win in the series. So far in the Ashes series, Australia won 34 Ashes and England won 33 Ashes, 5 series were drawn.

Diego Godin Announces his Retirement From Professional Football

Former Uruguay defender Diego Godin retired from professional soccer, ending a 20-year career at age 37. Godin played in four World Cups and spent much of his club career in Spain, notably at Atlético Madrid from 2010 to 2019. This season, he played in Argentina for Velez Sarsfield. Godin announced his retirement a day after his final appearance for Velez in a 1-0 loss to Huracan. Godin played more than 600 professional matches and scored 38 goals in his career. He lifted 10 titles, including two at the Europa League. He played for Uruguay at the past four World Cups. Godin won the UEFA Europa League twice with Atlético and claimed the UEFA Super Cup three times — lifting it as club captain the final time, in 2018.

Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar clinches Gold medal at FISU Games

Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, along with compound archers Avneet Kaur, Sangampreet Singh Bisla, and the men’s 10m air rifle team, achieved remarkable victories by securing gold medals at the FISU World University Games 2023 in Chengdu, the People’s Republic of China. With these achievements, India’s medal tally at the FISU World University Games 2023 reached an impressive total of 17 medals – nine gold, three

silver, and five bronze. India currently holds the fourth position on the medals table, trailing behind China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea. The Indian team celebrated the exceptional performance of shooter Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, who notched not one but two gold medals during the competition. Following his triumph in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions event, Aishwary continued his brilliant form by claiming the top spot in the men's 10m air rifle team event.

GM Gukesh overtakes Viswanathan Anand to become highest Indian in FIDE rankings

The 17-year-old chess prodigy, D. Gukesh, has dethroned Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand as India's top-ranked chess player in the live world rankings. Gukesh achieved this feat by defeating Mistradin Iskandarov in the second round of the FIDE World Cup, reaching a live rating of 2755.9 and climbing to the 9th position in the classic open category. In contrast, Anand's rating of 2754.0 caused him to drop to the 10th spot. This is only the second time since 1986 that Anand has been displaced from the top position. Gukesh's recent gain of 2.5 rating points pushed his live rating to 2755.9, while Anand's rating remains at 2754.0. As a result, Gukesh is now ranked as the 9th best chess player in the world, and Anand stands at 10th place. Anand had held the top position in India's chess rankings since January 1987 and has been one of the country's most prominent players since July 1991.

World Archery Championships 2023: India wins historic gold medal

The Indian women's compound archery team etched their names in history by clinching a gold medal at the World Archery Championships held in Berlin, Germany. This victory marked India's first-ever gold at the archery world championships in any category. It was India's first-ever gold at the archery world championships in any category. The triumphant team comprised Jyothi Surekha Vennam, Parneet Kaur, and Aditi Gopichand Swami. In the final round, they showcased an exceptional performance against the Mexican team, consisting of Dafne Quintero, Ana Sofia Hernandez Jeon, and Andrea Becerra. The Indian trio emerged victorious with a score of 235-229, demonstrating their prowess and precision in the sport.

Alex Hales from England announces retirement from International Cricket

Alex Hales has announced his retirement from international cricket with immediate effect, at the age of 34. He signs off from his England career as a T20 World Cup winner, having played his last game in their five-wicket win over Pakistan at the MCG in November last year. Hales, aged 34, was one of the leading figures of England's change in approach to white ball cricket under Eoin Morgan after the 2015 World Cup. He was also a key figure in them winning the 2022 T20 World Cup.

SAI launched short movie series 'Halla Bol' Under 'Cheer4India' Campaign

Sports Authority of India (SAI) under the Umbrella Campaign 'Cheer4India' has launched a short movie series 'Halla Bol' on the journey of Asian Games bound athletes to motivate them for Hangzhou Asian Games and spread awareness about the upcoming Asian Games. In the upcoming weeks, SAI has ambitious plans to release a total of 12 short films. This initiative aims to not only motivate athletes participating in the Asian Games 2023 but also to encourage the youth of the nation to embrace sports and pursue a career in the field. The first episode in the series was also unveiled which gave a glimpse onto the life of star Indian athlete Neeraj Chopra. The first video featuring Neeraj Chopra instantly became a hit on social media and has amassed massive views. The series is expected to rake in huge popularity as it focusses on the successful journey of athletes.

Neymar Jr Quits PSG To Sign For Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal

Brazil forward Neymar Jr has signed for Saudi Arabia's Al-Hilal from Paris Saint-Germain (PSG), the clubs announced, joining Cristiano Ronaldo and Karim Benzema. Neymar, 31, scored 118 goals in 173 matches for PSG in six injury-plagued seasons. He won five Ligue 1 titles and three French Cups, but was on the losing side as PSG were beaten by Bayern Munich in the 2020 Champions League final. Neymar joined PSG from Barcelona in 2017 for a world record fee of 222 million euros (\$242 million), a few weeks before they recruited Kylian Mbappe. The Brazilian scored 118 goals in 173 matches for PSG, winning five Ligue 1 titles and three French Cups, but his time at PSG was blighted by a catalogue of injuries. Although he helped the club to the 2020 Champions League final, which they lost 1-0 to Bayern Munich, he was sidelined for key games. Last month Al-Hilal made a 300-million-euro bid for Mbappe, though the striker reportedly refused to meet with officials from the team.

India gets first-ever night street racing circuit in Chennai

The Tamil Nadu government and Racing Promotions Private Limited (RRPL) have launched a new street circuit in Chennai. The 3.5km track will be located around the Island Grounds and will be the first-ever street circuit in India and South Asia to host a night race. The track will have elevation changes and 19 corners, including multiple chicanes. It will also offer stunning views of the Marina Beach Road and the Bay of Bengal. The event is scheduled to be held on December 9-10 and will feature the F4 Indian Championship and the Indian Racing League. The SDAT will be investing Rs 42 crore to host the event. The launch of the new street circuit is a major boost for motorsport in India. It will help to raise the profile of the sport and attract more fans and sponsors. It is also expected to boost tourism in Chennai. The event is expected to be a major success and will be a landmark moment for motorsport in India.

Dutee Chand gets four-year ban for failing dope test

Indian sprinter Dutee Chand, renowned as India's fastest female athlete and holder of the national 100m record, has been handed a significant blow with a four-year ban following her failure in an out-of-competition dope test. The test revealed the presence of selective androgen receptor modulators (SARMs), leading to the decision to suspend her from competitive sports. Chand's remarkable athletic career has now been marred by this doping incident. Chand's ban, which commences from January 3, 2023, stems from her failed out-of-competition dope test for SARMs, which occurred on December 5, 2022. As a consequence of her violation, all competitive outcomes she achieved from the date of sample collection will be annulled. This includes the forfeiture of any medals, points, and prizes she earned during this period. The verdict, delivered by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA), found Chand in breach of "article 2.1 and 2.2 of the NADA," resulting in a four-year ineligibility period under "article 10.2.1.1 of the NADA ADR 2021."

Wahab Riaz Announces Retirement From International Cricket

Pakistan fast bowler Wahab Riaz has announced his retirement from international cricket, bringing an end to a 15-year career. The 38-year-old made his international debut in 2008 and went on to play 27 Tests, 91 ODIs and 36 T20Is, taking 237 wickets in total. Riaz was a key member of the Pakistan team that reached the semi-finals of the 2011 Cricket World Cup, where he took five wickets against India. He was also a regular in the ODI and T20I teams, and was known for his fiery bowling and aggressive approach. However, Riaz's Test career was less successful. He struggled to find consistency with his line and length, and was often guilty of bowling too many loose deliveries. He retired from Test cricket in 2019.

Priya Malik Wins Gold at U20 World Wrestling Championships In Jordan

Indian wrestler Priya Malik has achieved a remarkable feat by securing the gold medal at the U20 World Wrestling Championships held in Jordan. This victory marks a significant milestone in her career. Competing in the 76 kg category, Priya Malik showcased her prowess on the mat. In the gold medal match, she triumphed over Germany's Laura Kuehn with a resounding score of 5-0. Priya Malik's victory makes her only the second Indian woman to attain a gold medal in the prestigious U20 World Wrestling Championships. She joins the ranks of Antim Panghal, another Indian wrestler who had previously secured a gold medal in the same competition. Priya's success is not only a personal triumph but also a contribution to India's outstanding performance at the U20 World Wrestling Championships, supported by the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).

India's Anahat Singh Clinches Gold In Asian Junior Squash Championships

Anahat Singh secured the gold medal in the U-17 category of the prestigious Asian Junior Squash Individual Championships, a remarkable achievement that adds another jewel to her growing crown of accomplishments. The championship, held from August 16 to 20, showcased Anahat's exceptional talent and determination as she emerged victorious on the court. The 15-year-old prodigy from India exhibited her prowess by defeating Hong Kong's Ena Kwong with a resounding 3-1 victory in the finals. In the quarterfinals and semifinals, she showcased her skill and determination by overcoming Malaysian players Doyce Lee and Whitney Isabelle Wilson, respectively. Last year, Anahat made her mark in the Asian Junior Squash Individual Championships held in Thailand, where she secured her first gold medal in this prestigious event.

Mohit Kumar becomes U-20 World Champion in Men's 61 kg Freestyle category

Through a captivating display of skill and unwavering resolve, Mohit Kumar has made a permanent mark in the records of Indian wrestling. He has achieved the distinction of being the first Indian wrestler to attain the junior world championship title since 2019.

In the final match, Mohit Kumar was trailing 0-6 against Russia's Eldar Akhmaduninov. Through adeptly executed maneuvers, he garnered nine consecutive points, ultimately securing the coveted gold medal. Prior to Mohit's victory, Deepak Punia had clinched the title in 2019, before making a transition to the senior circuit. Mohit's accomplishment places him among an elite group of Indian wrestlers who have achieved this honor. Notable wrestlers like Palwinder Cheema (2001) and Ramesh Kumar (2001) have previously secured the prestigious world junior title, making Mohit only the fourth Indian wrestler to ascend to this wrestling throne.

FIFA Women's World Cup 2023: Spain wins the title with 1-0 victory over England

Spain secured their first ever Women's World Cup title with a 1-0 win over England at the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup final in Sydney. The win marks a historic FIFA Women's World Cup campaign for Spain who previously failed to make it past the Round of 16. Making it to the final after knockout wins over Switzerland, the Netherlands and Sweden, was already a first for Spain with the victory in the final cause for an even bigger celebration. Captain Olga Carmona smashed the decisive goal as Spain defeated England 1-0 to lift the FIFA Women's World Cup title. Spain's first major international trophy made it the first European team to win the Women's World Cup since Germany in 2007. In addition, Spain's victory makes them only the second nation to have won both the men's and the women's World Cups. The other nation is Germany, who won the men's World Cup in 1974 and 1990, and the women's World Cup in 2003 and 2007. Spain's victory is a historic moment for the team, for the country, and for the women's game. It is a moment that will be remembered for many years to come.

Tirupati boy bags silver at Singapore Math Olympiad

In a remarkable feat of intellectual prowess, Raja Anirudh Sriram, a fourth-standard student hailing from Tirupati, has clinched a silver medal at the prestigious Singapore International Math Olympiad Challenge (SIMOC). This prodigious achievement has not only brought honor to his family and school but has also brought pride to the entire state of Andhra Pradesh. Among the 23 Indians representing the nation at the SIMOC, Raja Anirudh stood out as the sole participant from Andhra Pradesh. The event, which saw the participation of over 2000 students from 32 different countries, was a platform for young mathematical minds to showcase their skills and knowledge.

Khelo India Women's League To Be Known As Asmita Women's League

Anurag Singh Thakur, the Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, has unveiled that the esteemed Khelo India Women's League will be recognized as the "Asmita Women's League" from now on. This purposeful transformation underscores the government's commitment to advancing gender equality and nurturing the vibrant engagement of women in the realm of sports. The new name, "Asmita Women's League," carries a profound meaning. ASMITA stands for "Achieving Sports Milestone by Inspiring Women Through Action", encapsulating the spirit of resilience, determination, and achievement that defines women athletes across the nation. This change not only offers a new identity but also embodies the aspirations of countless women who strive to make their mark in the sporting arena. Mr. Thakur took to social media to commend the entire Khelo India team for their visionary concept of the Asmita Women's League. He also expressed his appreciation for the development of the Asmita Portal and its new logo, recognizing these advancements as significant steps towards the digital transformation of Indian sports. This demonstrates the government's commitment to leveraging technology to enhance the overall sports experience and engagement.

Wrestling Federation of India membership suspended on world stage

The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), India's governing body for wrestling, has faced suspension from the United World Wrestling (UWW) due to ongoing controversies and prolonged delays in conducting essential elections. As a consequence of this suspension, Indian wrestlers will be unable to compete under the Indian flag in the upcoming World Championships. Instead, they will participate as 'neutral athletes' in the Olympic-qualifying World Championships. The WFI's scheduled elections, initially set for June 2023, have been repeatedly postponed due to protests by Indian wrestlers and legal challenges from various state units. This delay prompted the UWW, the global authority for wrestling, to suspend the WFI's membership. The suspension comes as a result of the federation's failure to meet the required election timeline.

HS Prannoy Clinches Bronze At BWF World Badminton Championships 2023

Indian badminton player HS Prannoy secured the bronze medal in the men's singles category at the prestigious BWF World Badminton Championships 2023. Despite a valiant effort, Prannoy was eliminated in the semi-finals that took place in Copenhagen, Denmark on Saturday. His remarkable journey in the tournament showcased his skill and determination on the international stage. World No. 9 HS Prannoy faced a formidable challenge in the semi-finals as he went head-to-head with Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn, ranked third in the badminton world. The intense match stretched over one hour and 16 minutes at the Royal Arena. Prannoy fought valiantly but was eventually edged out by his Thai counterpart with a scoreline of 21-18, 13-21, 14-21.

Max Verstappen wins Dutch Grand Prix 2023

Max Verstappen has won the Dutch Grand Prix for the third consecutive year, once again prevailing at his home race. With the dominant win, Verstappen has now matched Sebastian Vettel's all-time record of nine F1 victories in a row. Fernando Alonso managed to return to the podium on a weekend when Aston Martin fitted a revised floor to the car by crossing the line in second place. The other Red Bull of Sergio Perez crossed the line in third place, however a five-second penalty promoted Pierre Gasly to the podium. The race was held at Circuit Zandvoort in the Netherlands on Sunday, August 27, 2023.

FIFA lifts ban on Sri Lanka Football Federation

World governing body FIFA has lifted the ban on the Sri Lanka Football Federation (FFSL). The ban was imposed in January 2023 due to government interference in the federation's affairs. In a letter dated August 28 by Fatma Samoura, the FIFA secretary General, it said that the FIFA bureau had decided on 27 August "to lift the suspension of the FFSL with immediate effect". The FFSL has also agreed to hold fresh elections for its executive committee. The lifting of the ban is a major boost for Sri Lankan football. It means that the country's national team will be able to resume international competition and that the FFSL will be able to resume its development programs. The FIFA Bureau's decision to lift the ban was welcomed by the Sri Lankan government and by the football community in the country. The government said that it was committed to supporting the development of football in Sri Lanka.

National Sports Day 2023: Theme, History and Importance

The National Sports Day 2023 in India is celebrated on 29 August 2023. This annual observance, held on August 29 in India, is a tribute to the enduring legacy of Major Dhyan Chand. The day also serves as a reminder for all of us to recall the contributions, determination, and extraordinary

achievements of the athletes and their influence in shaping societies. The theme for National Sports Day 2023 celebration is "Sports are an enabler to an inclusive and fit society". National Sports Day is also an occasion to raise awareness about the importance of sports and physical activity in our daily lives. Sports can help us stay fit and healthy, reduce stress, and build character. They can also teach us teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. The roots of National Sports Day in India can be traced back to the birth of one of its most revered sporting legends, Major Dhyhan Chand, who went on to become one of the most popular names in the game of hockey. Born on August 29, 1905, he started off his career with the British Indian Army regimental squad. His skills mesmerized the world, guiding India to three consecutive Olympic gold medals in 1928, 1932, and 1936.

Obituaries News

Padma Bhushan awardee and IAS officer N Vittal passes away

The Padma Bhushan awardee and IAS officer of the Gujarat cadre, 1960 batch, N Vittal passed away in Chennai. With the passing of N Vittal, 85, former Telecom Secretary and Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) on Thursday, the country has lost the person who had sown the seeds for the growth of the information technology sector four decades ago. His experience of more than 40 years covered a wide spectrum with focus on industrial administration, science and technology and security. As Secretary of the Department of Electronics (1990-1996), he initiated policies for boosting software, setting up software technology parks and strategic alliance with the industry. This eventually led to the formation of the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI).

Telangana folk singer Gaddar passes away

Renowned folk singer and activist Gaddar, who had been battling severe heart disease, passed away at the age of 74. He had been undergoing treatment at the Apollo Hospital in Hyderabad for the past 10 days following a cardiac arrest. Gaddar, also known as Gummadi Vittal Rao, gained popularity primarily through his stage name. He earned the title of the people's singer due to his songs that brought attention to various issues faced by the common people. Additionally, he showcased his acting skills in a few films, including "Maa Bhoomi" and "Rangula Kala". Gaddar was born into a Dalit family in Medak district of Telangana in 1949. During the 1980s, he went underground and became associated with the People's War Group, an underground communist party in India. He founded the Jana Natya Mandali, a Delhi-based theatre company which later evolved into the cultural wing of the naxalite outfit.

Former defence research body chief VS Arunachalam passes away

V S Arunachalam, a prominent scientist and instrumental figure in India's nuclear program, has died at the age of 87. He was known for his leadership roles at the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), he played a crucial role in shaping India's defense capabilities. V S Arunachalam was a prominent scientist who played a key role in India's nuclear program and defense capabilities. He held leadership positions at several prestigious institutions, including the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), the National Aeronautical Laboratory, and the Defence Metallurgical Research Laboratory. Arunachalam was born in 1934 in the Madras Presidency (now Tamil Nadu). He graduated from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, with a degree in metallurgical engineering. He then went on to earn a doctorate in metallurgy from the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom.

Eminent scientist Padma Shri MRS Rao passes away at 75

Padma Shri awardee and former President of Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Prof. M.R. Satyanarayana Rao passed away at his residence in Tata Nagar in Bengaluru on August 13 night. He was 75. Born in Mysuru, Prof Rao obtained his undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from Bangalore University. He got his PhD from the Indian Institute of Science and did his Postdoctoral Research at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas, USA.

British 'chat show king' Michael Parkinson passes away at 88

Michael Parkinson, the seasoned British chat show host renowned for his conversations with notable personalities, has passed away at the age of 88. His family said that he peacefully departed at his residence after a brief period of illness. Hailing from the coalmining village of Cudworth in northern England, Michael Parkinson took his initial steps into the professional world after leaving school at the age of 16. He ventured into the realm of journalism, starting his journey at local newspapers and eventually establishing himself at esteemed publications such as the Manchester Guardian and the Daily Express. Beginning in June 1971, television presenter Michael Parkinson hosted his talk show named 'Parkinson' captivating viewers with his distinctive interview approach, characterized by his amiable charm. The show enjoyed a prosperous run until 1982, later making a comeback in 1998, further solidifying Parkinson's status as a true chat show maestro. Parkinson's contributions to the world of media and entertainment were duly recognized when he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace in 2008. The honor bestowed upon him was a testament to his enduring influence on British culture. In 2005, he assumed the role of president for the Sports Journalists' Association of Great Britain.

Adobe Co-Founder Dr. John Warnock Passes Away at 82

Adobe co-founder Dr. John Warnock passed away at the age of 82, Adobe announces. He founded the revolutionary software company Adobe with his partner, the now-late Dr. Charles Geschke, in 1982. Marva Warnock designed the company's original logo, and Adobe released its first program, the desktop publishing software Adobe PostScript, two years later. Warnock served mostly as the company's CEO until 2000 and was co-chairman of the board along with Geschke until 2017. Warnock remained on the company board of directors afterward.

Legendary statistical scientist CR Rao passes away at the age of 103

C Radhakrishna Rao, one of India's greatest mathematicians and statisticians of India, passes away at the age of 103. He had recently received the prestigious "International Prize in Statistics-2023", often referred to as the "statistics' equivalent of the Nobel Prize". C R Rao was born into a Telugu family in Ballari, which was part of the Madras Presidency and is now in Karnataka. In 1941, he completed his MSc in Mathematics from Andhra University and joined Indian Statistical Institute in Calcutta in 1943 as research scholar. In 1945, when Rao was just 25, his paper titled 'Information and accuracy attainable in the estimation of statistical parameters' was published in the Bulletin of the Calcutta Mathematical Society, a lesser-known journal in the statistics community. His influential work has stretched beyond statistics, impacting diverse fields such as economics, genetics, anthropology, geology, national planning, demography, biometry, and medicine. Rao's active contributions persist even today, leading him to be celebrated as a "living legend" whose influence extends, as recognised by the American Statistical Association.

Wrestling icon and WWE Hall of Famer, Terry Funk, passes away

Terry Funk, the pioneer of the World Wrestling Entertainment and the WWE Hall of Famer, has passed away at the age of 79. Funk had an intriguing and remarkable career over five decades (1965 to 2017). He was known for his hardcore style, his charisma, and his passion for the business. The late 79-year-old was inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame in 2009 by his longtime friend and rival, Dusty Rhodes. In 2021, he also received recognition from the International Professional Wrestling Hall of Fame. The iconic WWE figure has secured multiple championship victories, encompassing the NWA World Heavyweight Championship, the ECW World Heavyweight Championship, and the WWF Tag Team Championship. He was also a part of several memorable feuds and matches with icons such as Ric Flair, Dusty Rhodes, Mick Foley, and Bret Hart.

Veteran Marathi actress Seema Deo passes away at 81

Veteran actor Seema Deo, remembered for her roles in Anand and Kora Kagaz, passes in Mumbai due to age-related ailments, she was 81. Seema Deo acted in nearly 90 Hindi and Marathi movies in a career spanning over six decades from the black-and-white to the colour era of the Indian film industry. She is hugely remembered for her major role in the musical blockbuster 'Anand', along with her husband Ramesh, and Amitabh Bachchan among other actors. Some of her renowned Marathi films are 'Jagachya Pathivar', 'Vardakshina', among many others. She was last seen in 'Jivan Sandhya' released in 2021. She was born Nalini Saraf on March 27, 1942, in Girgaum, Mumbai. She made her film debut in the Marathi film "Jagachya Pathivar" in 1962. She went on to act in over 90 Hindi and Marathi films, including "Anand" (1971), "Kora Kagaz" (1974), "Apradh" (1975), "Janaki" (1977), "Bezubaan" (1980), "Koshish" (1982), and "Sansar" (1987). She was married to actor Ramesh Deo from 1966 until his death in 2021.

Defence News**Indian Army to now have common uniform for Brigadier and above ranks**

The Indian Army has recently implemented a significant change in its uniform regulations for senior officers with the rank of Brigadier and above. The decision aims to foster a common identity and uphold the Indian Army's character as a fair and equitable organization. This move comes after detailed discussions during the Army Commanders Conference and extensive consultations with various stakeholders. Army officials have announced that the headgear, shoulder rank badges, gorget patches, belt, and shoes of senior officers with flag ranks (Brigadier and above) will now be standardized and common across all units and services. Notably, these officers will no longer wear any lanyards (braid patterns worn on the shoulders of uniforms to denote the wearer's qualification or regimental affiliation).

India launches 'Neerakshi' - Autonomous Underwater Vehicle for mine detection

The AUV named 'Neerakshi' is a collaboration of Kolkata-based warshipmaker Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd and MSME entity AEPL. An autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) designed to detect mines and a first of its kind in the country was launched. Named "Neerakshi" meaning "Eyes in the Water" is first of its kind in the country and is expected to undergo user trials by the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, and Army before a commercial launch.

Defence Ministry to switch to locally built OS in computers amid threats

In a significant step towards strengthening its cyber defenses, India's Ministry of Defence has taken a decisive step by opting to replace the Microsoft operating system with a domestically developed alternative named the 'Maya' operating system. This strategic move aims to elevate the nation's cybersecurity measures in the face of escalating cyber threats. Devised and formed by a government organization, the Maya Operating System stands as a testament to local innovation and dedication. It was created within a brief timeframe of just six months. The locally-developed OS was constructed using the open-source Ubuntu framework. Maya boasts an interface and full functionality akin to Windows, ensuring a seamless transition for users. A trial run of the Maya operating system is set to commence by August 15. The preliminary phase will witness the deployment of the Maya OS on a limited number of ministry computers, with plans in place to scale its implementation across the entire spectrum of connected systems.

Swathi Mountains: A Compact Weapon Locating Radar

The Indian Army has recently inducted a new addition to its arsenal, the "Swathi Mountains," a lighter and more compact version of the indigenous Weapon Locating Radar (WLR-M). This advanced radar system, developed by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) in Bengaluru, holds a pivotal role in enhancing military operations, particularly in challenging terrains. The Weapon Locating Radar (WLR) has emerged as a cornerstone of modern military strategies, employing sophisticated signal processing techniques to autonomously detect and track hostile artillery, mortars, and rocket launchers. This radar's prowess lies in its ability to identify and monitor small projectiles across the battlefield, accounting for environmental conditions to estimate launch and impact points accurately. Notably, the WLR's mobility and swift deployment capabilities make it adaptable to evolving operational requirements. Its versatile design allows it to scan different areas without necessitating physical repositioning.

India inducts new Heron Mark-2 drones

The Indian Air Force has inducted its latest Heron Mark 2 drones, which have strike capability and can carry out surveillance along the borders with both China and Pakistan in a single sortie itself. The four new Heron Mark-2 drones, which can be equipped with long-range missiles and other weapons systems, have been deployed at a forward air base in the northern sector. The induction of the Heron Mark-2 is a major boost for the IAF's surveillance capabilities. The drone will be used for a variety of missions, including intelligence gathering, border patrol, and counter-insurgency operations. It will also be used to support the IAF's combat aircraft, providing them with real-time imagery and targeting data.

INS Kulish Participates In Celebration Of 77th Independence Day in Singapore

In a notable display of maritime cooperation, the guided missile corvette INS Kulish made its presence felt during Singapore's 77th Independence Day festivities. As part of its

ongoing engagement in the multinational SEACAT 2023 exercise, the crew and officers of INS Kulish celebrated the occasion at the High Commission of India in Singapore. Currently embarked on a four-day tour, INS Kulish is participating in the multinational SEACAT 2023 exercise. Hailing from the Andaman and Nicobar Command's Port Blair, the corvette's primary mission is to contribute to the Harbour Phase of SEACAT 2023. This initiative aims to bolster interoperability and collective action on various maritime security challenges. The exercise, which commenced on August 14 and is scheduled until August 17, will transition to the sea phase, continuing until August 25.

IAF To Hold Multi-National Exercise 'Tarang Shakti' Next Year

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is gearing up to host a colossal multilateral military exercise, 'Tarang Shakti', which was originally slated for October but has been rescheduled to the middle of 2024. The decision to push the exercise to next year comes as several participating air forces expressed their inability to join the wargame if held in the current year. 'Tarang Shakti' is set to draw the involvement of some prominent air forces, including those of France, the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States, and Japan. These nations will contribute their aerial assets such as fighter jets, military transport aircraft, and mid-air refuelers to the exercise. Additionally, six other countries have been invited to participate as observers, further emphasizing the exercise's significance on the global stage.

Govt of India launched 'Meri Maati Mera Desh Campaign'

To commemorate 75 years of Independence, various Air Force Stations in and around Delhi celebrated the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) from 09 to 15 August 2023. The events were organized under the aegis of the 'Meri Maati Mera Desh Campaign', launched by the Government of India as a continuation for celebration of AKAM. One of the key activities of the campaign was the development of an Amrit Vatika (Amrit Garden) in each station by planting 75 saplings of indigenous species. This was done to replenish mother earth as 'Vasudha Vandhan' (reforestation). The saplings were planted by the personnel of the stations, school children, residents of the localities, and panchayat members.

Bengali

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Government clears Rs 20000 cr deal to build five warships

In a significant development aimed at enhancing the operational capabilities of the Indian Navy, the Central Government has granted its final approval for a pivotal project to construct five fleet support ships. These vessels, designed to serve as vital logistical lifelines, will play a crucial role in replenishing warships with essential supplies including fuel, food, and ammunition during missions. The responsibility for constructing these crucial fleet support ships has been entrusted to the Visakhapatnam-based Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), a flagship enterprise under the defense ministry. By opting for indigenous construction, the Indian Navy is not only reinforcing its operational capabilities but also contributing significantly to the government's vision of self-reliance. This decision aligns with the broader goal of reducing dependence on foreign imports and bolstering domestic industries.

President Murmu launches INS Vindhyagiri

In a significant stride towards bolstering India's maritime prowess, President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the latest addition to the Indian Navy's fleet, INS Vindhyagiri. The launch event was held at the Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE). Following the launch of INS Vindhyagiri, the vessel will join its sister ships, INS Himgiri and INS Dunagiri, at the Outfitting Jetty at GRSE. The vessel derives its name from the mighty Vindhya mountain range, symbolizing strength, determination, and unwavering resolve.

LCA Tejas Successfully Test-Fires Astra Beyond Visual Range Air-To-Air Missile

The Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas achieved a significant milestone as it successfully fired the Astra indigenous Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air missile off the coast of Goa. This achievement marks a notable advancement in the Indian defense capabilities and showcases the country's progress in developing cutting-edge military technology. According to a statement released by the Defence Ministry, the missile release was executed flawlessly from the Tejas aircraft at an altitude of approximately 20,000 feet. The test not only met all its predetermined objectives but also demonstrated a perfect textbook launch, affirming the precision and readiness of the Astra missile system. To ensure a comprehensive monitoring of the event, a Chase Tejas twin-seater aircraft closely observed the entire process, adding an extra layer of validation to the test. The successful test launch was carried out under the vigilant supervision of the Test Director and scientists hailing from prominent institutions like the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). The Center for Military Airworthiness and Certification (CEMILAC) and the Directorate General of Aeronautical Quality Assurance (DG-AQA) also played pivotal roles in ensuring the comprehensive assessment of the launch.

Indian Air Force Makes Its Debut In Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23 In Egypt

An Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent has embarked on a significant journey, marking the first-ever participation in Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23. This biennial multilateral tri-service exercise is taking place at Cairo (West) Air Base in Egypt, spanning from August 27 to September 16, 2023. The participation of the IAF in this exercise underscores a new chapter of cooperation and collaboration among nations. Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23 gathers not only the IAF but also contingents from esteemed nations such as the United States of America, Saudi Arabia, Greece, and Qatar. The convergence of these military forces in a common endeavor highlights the commitment to strengthening international partnerships, fostering interoperability, and promoting a shared understanding of joint operations. The Indian Air Force contingent for this exercise is an impressive assembly, comprising five MiG-29 aircraft, two IL-78 aircraft, two C-130 aircraft, and two C-17 aircraft. In addition to these aircraft, personnel from the IAF's distinguished Garud Special Forces and members of the Numbers 28, 77, 78, and 81 Squadrons will be actively participating. Notably, the IAF's transport aircraft will play a pivotal role in airlifting approximately 150 personnel from the Indian Army, showcasing the integrated efforts of different branches of the Indian Armed Forces.

Books & Authors News**Rishi Raj's New Book "Kargil: Ek Yatri Ki Jubani" Released**

Ajay Bhatt, Minister of State (MoS), Ministry of Defence (MoD), released the book and illustrations titled "Kargil: Ek Yatri Ki Jubani" (Hindi Edition) authored by Rishi Raj at the Constitution Club of India, New Delhi, Delhi. The book which pays tribute to the Martyrs of Kargil War was published by Prabhat Prakashan. The book portrays the lives of all the 527 soldiers, who laid down their lives for our nation in the Kargil War. The book highlights the importance of the Kargil Vijay Diwas and giving rich tributes to the brave soldiers. The book and illustrations – "Kargil: Ek Yatri Ki Jubani" – authored by renowned writer Shri Rishi Raj, and published by Prabhat Prakashan, impeccably portrays the lives of the heroes of the Kargil War on the canvas of patriotism so that they could be a fountainhead of inspiration for children who could learn the values of the paramount sacrifice made by the Indian Army for the nation.

Indian-origin author Chetna Maroo's debut novel on Booker Prize longlist

London-based Indian-origin author Chetna Maroo's debut novel 'Western Lane' is among 13 books to make the cut for the 2023 Booker Prize longlist revealed. Kenya-born Maroo's novel, set within the context of the British Gujarati milieu, has been praised by the Booker judges for its use of the sport of squash as a metaphor for complex human emotions. It revolves around the story of an 11-year-old girl named Gopi and her bonds with her family. The 13 books, with authors spanning Malaysia, Nigeria, Ireland, Canada, the US and the

UK, explore universal and topical themes – from deeply moving personal dramas to tragicomic family sagas, from the effects of climate change to the oppression of minorities, and from scientific breakthroughs to competitive sport.

A new book “How Prime Ministers Decide”, by veteran journalist Neerja Chowdhury released

A new book, titled How Prime Ministers Decide, by veteran journalist Neerja Chowdhury recalls the drama that led to Sonia’s announcement, prompted by Rahul’s “fear for his mother’s life”. A new book also claimed that former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had good relations with several RSS leaders but carefully kept a distance between the organisation and herself. The author analyses the operating styles of the country’s prime ministers through the prism of six decisions of historic significance. These are as follows: the strategy that Indira Gandhi devised to return to power in 1980, after her humiliating defeat post the Emergency in 1977; the errors of judgment that led Rajiv Gandhi to undo the Supreme Court’s judgment in the Shah Bano case; V. P. Singh’s implementation of the Mandal Commission Report to save his government which forever changed the face of contemporary politics.

Poet- Diplomat Abhay K Launches his New Book ‘Monsoon’

Indian -poet -diplomat Abhay Kumar (Abhay K), Deputy Director General of Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR), launched his new book titled “Monsoon: A Poem of Love and Longing”, a book-length poem running across 150 fourline stanzas, at Kathika Culture Centre in Old Delhi, Delhi. The book was published by Sahitya Akademi on the occasion of its 68th anniversary (13th March 2022). The book is a poem that follows the monsoon which originates from Madagascar and travels to the Srinagar in the Himalayas and back to Madagascar. In the preface to Monsoon: A Poem of Love and Longing, the poet traces how he came to write a love poem that connects India and Madagascar. One of Abhay K’s books is a translation of Kalidasa’s Meghaduta into English. So, this preoccupation with topos – topography, so to say – remains firmly in the poet’s oeuvre.

PS Sreedharan Pillai Released Three New Books on Nature, Trees, and Geopolitics

Goa governor PS Sreedharan Pillai released three books at a function held at the Raj Bhavan. His recently authored three new books namely ‘Heritage Trees of Goa’, ‘When Parallel Lines Meet’, and ‘Ente Priya Kavithakal’ (‘My Dear Poems’ a collection of poems). Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant inaugurated the event in Panaji, Goa. West Bengal governor CV Ananda Bose unveiled the book ‘Heritage Trees of Goa’, while Goa chief minister Pramod Sawant inaugurated the event. Goa state minister for tourism Rohan Khaunte and Jnanpith winner Damodar Mauzo released two other books: ‘When Parallel Lines Meet’ and ‘Ente Priya Kavithakal’.

Miscellaneous News

One more Cheetah dies at Kuno National Park, taking toll to nine

A female cheetah named Dhatri (Tbilisi) has recently passed away at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh. This brings the total number of deaths to nine, including six adult cheetahs relocated from Namibia and South Africa, along with three cubs born in India, all since March this year. Currently, a post-mortem examination is underway to determine the cause of death. In response to this unfortunate event, park authorities took immediate action by returning all the cheetahs (with the exception of the two females) to their enclosures for thorough examination and medical treatment. A specialist veterinarian from South Africa was summoned to address the wounds and administer Fluralaner, a systemic insecticide and acaricide used orally or topically to manage the health of the remaining cheetahs.

Endangered Himalayan Vulture, bred in captivity for the First Time in India

The Assam State Zoo recently recorded the breeding of a Himalayan Vulture in captivity for the first time in India. Details of the successful breeding were recently published in a paper titled ‘Breeding of Himalayan Vulture Gyps himalayensis Hume, 1869 in the Assam State Zoo, Guwahati, Assam. The species categorised as ‘Near Threatened’ with an estimated population of 66,000, witnessed a significant moment of hope in their conservation journey. The groundbreaking captive breeding of the Himalayan Vulture was recorded on 14th March, 2022, at the Assam State Zoo, making a significant achievement for wildlife preservation. These Vultures, which are native to the high Himalayas, were rescued from various poisoning and accident incidents in 2011-2012. The successful breeding comes as a dedicated effort to create a suitable environment for the birds and acclimate them to the tropical conditions of the zoo.

Rajouri’s chikri wood craft, Anantnag’s Mushqbudji rice receive GI tag

In a significant recognition of local craftsmanship and agricultural heritage, the Geographical Indication (GI) Tags have been bestowed upon Rajouri Chikri Wood Craft from Rajouri district and the prized Mushqbudji Rice variety from Anantnag district. These labels signify the unique nature and exceptional qualities of these products, tracing their origins to specific regions. This achievement is a result of a collaborative effort involving NABARD, the Department of Handicrafts & Handloom, and the Department of Agriculture, commencing in December 2020.

Hailing from the elevated landscapes of Kashmir, particularly Anantnag district, Mushqbudji Rice takes center stage as a premium aromatic short bold rice variety. When cooked, this rice dazzles with a captivating fusion of flavor, aroma, and sensory properties that are truly distinct.

Nestled within the hill ranges of Jammu province's Rajouri district, the exquisite Chikri Wood Craft stands as a testament to intricate artistry. Admired for its pale, honey-colored softwood, Chikri is brought to life through meticulous carving and fine detailing.

New Amravati Station Becomes Central Railway's Third 'Pink Station'

Central Railway's New Amravati station has engraved its place in history as the first station in Bhusaval Division and the third station within the Central Railway to be designated a "Pink Station" – a station that is wholly managed by women staff. The New Amravati station boasts a team of 12 proficient women employees, each playing a crucial role in ensuring the seamless operation of the station. Among these accomplished individuals are 4 Deputy Station Superintendents, 4 Pointswomen, 3 Railway Protection Personnel, and 1 Station Ticket Booking Agent. Their collective efforts culminate in the efficient management of the station, fostering an environment of competence and inclusivity. Central Railway has consistently led the way in ensuring equitable opportunities for its female workforce. It proudly holds the accolade of being the inaugural zone within the Indian Railways to establish an all-women managed station, with Matunga Station on the Mumbai Division being the first, succeeded by Ajni Station on the Nagpur Division.

Why Island of Katchatheevu in news?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his speech in the Parliament during the No Confidence debate on August 10, mentioned the island of Katchatheevu. Hitting out at Rahul Gandhi for his now expunged Bharat Mata remarks, PM Modi said it was the Indira Gandhi government which gave away Katchatheevu to Sri Lanka in 1974. Katchatheevu is an uninhabited off-shore island in the Palk Strait. The island is located between Neduntheevu, Sri Lanka and Rameswaram, India. It was formed due to volcanic eruptions in the 14th century. The 285-acre land was jointly administered by India and Sri Lanka during British rule. The Raja of Ramnad (present-day Ramanathapuram, Tamil Nadu) owned Katchatheevu island and later became part of the Madras Presidency. In 1921, both Sri Lanka and India claimed this piece of land for fishing and the dispute remained unsettled. After Indian independence, the country initiated to resolve the pre-independence territory dispute between Ceylon and the British. Today, the uninhabited island is administered by Sri Lanka.

One District One Product 'ODOP Wall' Launched

In a significant stride towards showcasing the rich heritage of Indian craftsmanship and fostering self-reliance, the One District One Product (ODOP) program has joined hands with the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM) to launch the captivating and innovative 'ODOP Wall'. This initiative not only celebrates India's artistic

diversity but also amplifies the voices of rural artisans and women entrepreneurs, providing them with a platform to showcase their exceptional skills and craftsmanship to the world. The 'ODOP Wall' launch event marked a significant step towards the realization of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision to exhibit the unparalleled uniqueness of Indian crafts to the world. This collaboration between the ODOP program and DAY-NRLM aims to highlight the exceptional craftsmanship and cultural significance embedded within the products that originate from various districts across India.

NBRI launches lotus variety which blooms in all seasons

In a momentous celebration, the CSIR-National Botanical Research Institute (CSIR-NBRI) launched an extraordinary variety of the national flower, Lotus, named 'Namoh 108'. This unique flower boasts an astonishing 108 petals and was dedicated to the nation on the eve of Independence Day, underscoring its significance in the cultural and religious tapestry of India. The unveiling took place during the NBRI's week-long festival 'One Week One Lab Programme' in Lucknow, with CSIR Director General N Kalaiselvi leading the ceremony. The 'Namoh 108' lotus variety has been meticulously developed by NBRI scientists, who brought the original plant from Manipur for comprehensive research. It became the first Lotus variety to have its entire genome sequenced, ensuring its longevity and protection from potential extinction. Unlike its counterparts, the 'Namoh 108' lotus variety has exhibited exceptional resilience to varying weather conditions, showcasing its ability to bloom magnificently from March to December.

The G20 Film Festival kicked off with the screening of "Pather Panchali"

The first G20 film festival, organized by the Ministry of External Affairs and India International Centre, commenced in Delhi with the screening of the renowned drama film "Pather Panchali" by Satyajit Ray. The distinguished veteran actor Victor Banerjee and G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant graced the festival's grand opening, symbolizing a significant stride towards nurturing cross-cultural comprehension through the medium of cinema. The festival unfolded against the backdrop of the Indian classic, "Pather Panchali", directed by the visionary Satyajit Ray in 1955. This cinematic masterpiece, celebrated for its emotional depth and timeless relevance, set the stage for a cinematic extravaganza that will span 17 days, culminating on September 3rd. The captivating journey will encompass 15 more exceptional films that have left an indelible mark on the global cinematic landscape. Bound together by the worldwide language of film, the festival stands as a tribute to the potency of narrative and its capacity to foster ties that surpass boundaries. The G20 Film Festival seeks to honor and display the dynamic and cooperative alliance that exists among the G20 and invited nations in the realm of cinema.

Granting of Geographical Indication (GI) Tag to Matti Banana Variety of Kanniyakumari District

The Matti banana variety native to Kanniyakumari district has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag. These bananas thrive uniquely in the district's climate and soil, resulting in a larger-than-human finger-sized fruit with a sweet aroma and honey-like taste. Size and Taste: Matti bananas are slightly larger-than-human finger-sized fruits with a sweet fragrance and honey-like taste that remains unmatched outside their native region. Variety Diversity: There are six distinct types of Matti bananas, each boasting unique qualities in terms of color, aroma, and flavor.

Srinagar's Tulip Garden Enters Record Books With 1.5mn Flowers

Nestled amidst the picturesque foothills of the Zabarwan range, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden has etched its name in the annals of the World Book of Records as Asia's largest and most spectacular park of its kind. The garden, adorned with a enchanting variety of 1.5 million blooming flowers, stands as a living testament to the beauty and diversity of nature. The World Book President and CEO, Santosh Shukla, bestowed the esteemed certification upon Fayaz Sheikh, the Secretary of Floriculture, Gardens, and Parks. With an enchanting collection of 68 distinctive tulip varieties, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden is a captivating tapestry of colors and shapes. Each tulip variety presents a unique personality, painting the landscape with hues that range from the most delicate pastels to the most vibrant and striking shades. The garden's meticulously curated collection showcases the tireless efforts of horticulturists and botanists in cultivating a breathtaking array of nature's wonders.

Why Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary in news?

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) recently addressed a serious issue concerning the Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, located in the Balasore district of Odisha. The NGT's intervention reflects its commitment to safeguarding the delicate balance between development and conservation. Illegal mining is happening in a sensitive area of the Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, and someone has complained about it. They are worried because this mining is taking place near a place called Similipal-Hadgarh-Kuldiha-Conservation Reserve, specifically in the Sukhuapata Reserved Forest area. The person who complained said that around 97 places where sand is being dug up have been given permission for this mining. They're saying that this is not allowed according to a law called the Forest (Conservation) Act, which was made in 1980. They are concerned that these mining activities could harm the environment and the animals living there. The person who complained also talked about a decision by the highest court in India, called the Supreme Court. This decision said that mining can only happen if they have a good plan to take care of the animals and nature. They also mentioned that an important path that elephants use should be protected as a special area.

India's First Hydrogen Bus Hits the Public Roads in Leh, Ladakh

NTPC Limited, a prominent Maharatna Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) operating under the Ministry of Power (MoP), has embarked on a groundbreaking venture by launching the trial of India's inaugural hydrogen bus in the picturesque region of Leh, situated in the Union Territory (UT) of Ladakh. This remarkable endeavor not only marks the country's first utilization of hydrogen buses on public roads but also reflects NTPC's commitment towards fostering sustainability and reducing carbon emissions. The maiden hydrogen bus has arrived in Leh, symbolizing the commencement of a significant three-month-long process. This process encompasses rigorous field trials, comprehensive roadworthiness assessments, and essential regulatory clearances, all of which are vital steps towards integrating hydrogen-powered buses into Ladakh's transport ecosystem.

Why Zika Virus in news?

Zika virus, initially identified in Uganda in 1947, is primarily transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes, which are active during the day. While many infections are asymptomatic, those who show symptoms typically experience rash, fever, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, malaise, and headache for around 2-7 days. Zika infection during pregnancy can lead to microcephaly and congenital malformations in infants. Congenital Zika syndrome encompasses clinical features like limb contractures, high muscle tone, eye abnormalities, and hearing loss. Roughly 5-15% of infants born to Zika-infected mothers exhibit related complications, including those resulting from asymptomatic infections. Zika virus is also linked to Guillain-Barré syndrome, neuropathy, and myelitis, predominantly in adults and older children. Ongoing research investigates these neurological effects and their impact on pregnancy outcomes.

Kashmir to Host Miss World 2023 in December

In an exciting announcement, Julia Eric Morely, the CEO of Miss World, held a press conference in the picturesque region of Kashmir, India. The occasion marked the anticipation and preparation for the 71st edition of the prestigious Miss World beauty pageant, which is scheduled to be hosted in India. Morely's words echoed the sentiment of excitement and emotion surrounding the event, saying, "Truthfully, I am so happy. It is emotional for us, to see such beauty." CEO Morely expressed her enthusiasm for the upcoming event, inviting everyone to witness the grandeur in November, with the final show scheduled for December 8. She extended her gratitude to the people of Kashmir, applauding their warmth and hospitality and conveyed the Miss World organization's eagerness to return for the event. Following the press conference, rumors began circulating about the potential location of the pageant in the lush valleys of Kashmir.

However, recent reports have clarified that no specific venue has been confirmed yet. Jamid Saidi, Chairman of PME Entertainment, took the opportunity to set the record straight. PME and the Miss World organization officially stated that the venue for the Miss World 2023 will be announced later.

Chokuwa Rice: The Enchanting “Magic Rice” of Assam Gets GI Tag

Chokuwa rice, fondly known as “Magic rice,” has recently been bestowed with the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag, a recognition of its exceptional attributes and heritage. This remarkable rice variety is deeply intertwined with the culinary legacy of Assam and has a rich historical connection with the powerful Ahom dynasty. Ancient Legacy: Chokuwa rice, also referred to as Magic rice, has been a dietary cornerstone for centuries. It was a staple for the troops of the revered Ahom dynasty, echoing its historical significance.

Geographical Origin: The cultivation of Chokuwa rice is unique to the Brahmaputra River region, encompassing areas like Tinsukia, Dhemaji, and Dibrugarh in Assam.

Sali Rice Base: Chokuwa rice is a semi-glutinous winter rice variety, specifically categorized as Sali rice. Its distinctiveness lies in its sticky and glutinous characteristics, which are further classified into Bora and Chokuwa types based on their amylose content.

