

**Weekly Current Affairs-20th To 24th August 2024 English****National News****Centenary Commemorative Coin Honoring M. Karunanidhi**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on August 18, released the centenary commemorative coin of Dr. Kalaignar M. Karunanidhi in Chennai. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister paid rich tributes to the late leader and described him as one of the icons of Indian politics.

**India's First Constitution Museum Marks 75 Years of the Indian Constitution**

India's first Constitution Museum, named "The Constitution Academy and The Rights & Freedoms Museum," is set to be inaugurated by OP Jindal Global University on November 26, 2024. This initiative celebrates the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Indian Constitution.

**3 Online Platforms Launched to Boost Country's Power Sector Efficiency**

The Union Ministry of Power launched three new online platforms—PROMPT, DRIPS, and JAL VIDYUT DPR—to enhance efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness in the power sector. These platforms, unveiled by Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on August 20, 2024, in New Delhi, were developed by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) under the Ministry of Power, with NTPC assisting in the development of the PROMPT platform.

**Health Ministry constitutes the National Task Force on Healthcare Worker Safety**

The Health Ministry has formed a 14-member National Task Force (NTF) to address the safety and working conditions of medical professionals in India. In response to ongoing protests and as mandated by the Supreme Court, the NTF will develop recommendations focused on preventing violence against healthcare workers and establishing national protocols for dignified and safe working conditions across the medical profession.

**India's KAPS-4 Nuclear Plant Achieves Full Capacity**

The Kakrapar Atomic Power Station (KAPS) in Gujarat, India, has reached full operational capacity with its second 700 MW nuclear reactor, KAPS-4, which started operating at full power on August 21, 2024. This achievement follows the reactor's commercial operation start on March 31, 2024, and its first criticality on December 17, 2023. The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) confirmed that Unit 4 at KAPS was previously operating at 90% capacity before reaching its full 700 MW output.

**PM Modi Presents BHISHM Cubes to Ukraine**

In a historic visit to Ukraine, Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged extensive humanitarian support and handed over four BHISHM (Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri) Cubes to the Ukrainian government. This marks the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine since its independence in 1991, emphasizing India's stance for peace amidst the ongoing conflict with Russia.

**International News****China Approves \$31 Billion for 11 New Nuclear Reactors Across Five Sites**

China has approved the construction of 11 new nuclear reactors across five sites, with a total investment of approximately 220 billion yuan (\$31 billion). This marks a record number of permits as the government intensifies its reliance on nuclear energy to reduce carbon emissions. The State Council's approval includes reactors in Jiangsu, Shandong, Guangdong, Zhejiang, and Guangxi. The construction is expected to take about five years.

**Nepal To Export 1000 MW Electricity To India**

Nepal will export nearly 1,000 MW of electricity to India, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said after meeting his Nepalese counterpart Arzu Rana Deuba in New Delhi on August 19. He went on to describe the development as a "new milestone".

**Ulchi Freedom Shield Exercises**

For the first time in recent history, the 51st Fighter Wing at Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea, is incorporating its recurring wing readiness exercise into Ulchi Freedom Shield 24. The 51st FW readiness exercise started on Aug. 19 and will continue until Aug. 23, 2024.

**India Surpasses China As Top Importer Of Russian Oil**

India overtook China as the world's biggest importer of Russian oil in July as Chinese refiners bought less because of lower profit margins from producing fuels, a comparison of import data showed.

**India and Denmark Collaborate on Clean River Initiative**

Diana Pundole, a teacher and mother from Pune, has made history as the first Indian woman to win the national championship in the saloon category at the MRF Indian National Car Racing Championship 2024 held in Chennai. Her achievement is especially notable as it comes in a sport traditionally dominated by men, highlighting her determination and skill despite numerous challenges.

## State News

**Rajasthan Govt Secures Rs 5.21 Trillion in Investment Proposals Ahead of Summit**

The Rajasthan government has received investment proposals amounting to over Rs 5.21 lakh crore (approximately USD 62 billion) in the lead-up to the 'Rising Rajasthan' Investment Summit 2024. These proposals, received within two weeks of the summit's announcement, are expected to generate approximately 1.55 lakh direct jobs. This investment sum represents more than 33% of the state's current Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), estimated at Rs 15.28 lakh crore for 2023-24.

**South Indian Adivasi Knowledge Centre To Be Launched In B.R. Hills**

Kaanu, a South Indian Adivasi Knowledge Centre, will be launched at the Tribal Health Resource Centre (THRC) at BR Hills, Karnataka on August 25. Prashanth N. Srinivas, a medical doctor and public health researcher working at the Institute of Public Health, Bangalore's field station in B.R. Hills, says that Kaanu, which means evergreen forest in both Kannada and Soliga language.

## Rankings &amp; Reports News

**Amul Tops Global Food Brand Rankings in 2024**

Amul has been named the world's strongest food brand in Brand Finance's Global Food & Drinks Report 2024. With a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 91 and a valuation of \$3.3 billion, Amul achieved an 11% increase in brand value from 2023. The company's dominance in India's dairy market and strong metrics in familiarity, consideration, and recommendation contributed to its AAA+ rating. Hershey's, which shared the AAA+ rating with Amul, saw a slight dip in its brand value, placing it second.

## Business News

**Net FDI Rises to \$6.9 Billion in Q1 FY25**

According to the latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), net foreign direct investment (FDI) in India surged to \$6.9 billion during the April-June quarter of FY25, compared to \$4.7 billion in the same period last year. This increase was driven by a significant rise in gross inward FDI, which grew by 26.4% year-on-year (Y-o-Y) to reach \$22.5 billion. Key sectors such as manufacturing, financial services, communication services, computer services, and energy accounted for about 80% of the total inflows.

**NCLT Approves Slice and North East Small Finance Bank Merger**

Fintech company Slice has received approval from the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) for its merger with North East Small Finance Bank. The Guwahati bench of the NCLT has sanctioned the scheme of arrangement and amalgamation involving several entities, including Garagepreneurs Internet, Quadrillion Finance, Intergalactory Foundry, RGVN (North East) Microfinance, and North East Small Finance Bank.

## Agreement News

**MSDE Exchanged An MoU With Flipkart's SCOA**

Flipkart's Supply Chain Operations Academy (SCOA) exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) at the Samarth event with the mission to upskill thousands of employable youth across India.

## Appointment News

**Ashok Kumar Singh Takes Over as Director General, ESIC**

Shri Ashok Kumar Singh, IAS took over the charge of Director General of Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) under Ministry of Labour & Employment, Govt. of India at its Headquarters in New Delhi on August 19.

**Satya Prakash Sangwan Appointed as Chef de Mission for Paris Paralympics 2024**

Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) made a significant announcement regarding the leadership of the Indian contingent for the upcoming Paris Paralympics. Satya Prakash Sangwan, the vice president of PCI, has been appointed as the Chef de Mission (CDM) for the Indian team.

**M Suresh Appointed as Interim Chairman of Airports Authority of India**

In a significant development in India's aviation sector, M Suresh has been appointed as the interim Chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI). This appointment, effective Tuesday, marks a crucial transition in the leadership of one of India's most important aviation bodies.

**Rajesh Nambiar Named NASSCOM President-Designate**

Rajesh Nambiar has been appointed as the president-designate of the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM), succeeding Debjani Ghosh, whose tenure concludes in November 2024. Following this appointment, Nambiar has resigned from his role as Chairman and Managing Director of Cognizant India. His extensive industry experience, including leadership roles at

TCS, IBM, Ciena, and Cognizant, positions him as a key figure in guiding India's tech sector through its next phase of growth.

### **Amardeep Singh Bhatia Appointed as DPIIT Secretary**

Amardeep Singh Bhatia, a 1993-batch IAS officer from the Nagaland cadre, has officially assumed the role of Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). He succeeds Rajesh Kumar Singh, who has been appointed as Officer on Special Duty in the Department of Defence. Bhatia's extensive experience includes key roles in both central and state governments, particularly in the Ministries of Corporate Affairs and Health & Family Welfare.

### **Deepti Gaur Mukherjee Assumes Charge as MCA Secretary**

Deepti Gaur Mukherjee, a 1993 batch IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre, has taken over as the Secretary of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), succeeding Manoj Govil, who recently assumed the role of Expenditure Secretary. Before this, Mukherjee served as the CEO of the National Health Authority.

### **Nestlé Announces Laurent Freixe to Succeed Mark Schneider as CEO**

Nestlé made public its decision to appoint Laurent Freixe as the new Chief Executive Officer, replacing the outgoing Mark Schneider. This announcement marks a new chapter in the company's storied history and sets the stage for potential shifts in strategy and direction.

## **Banking News**

### **Airtel Payments Bank Enhances Security with AI-Powered Face Match**

Airtel Payments Bank has introduced a new security feature called Face Match, leveraging AI to enhance account protection. This advanced tool uses machine learning algorithms to detect potential threats and prompts facial recognition verification when needed.

## **Science & Technology News**

### **SpaceX's Polaris Dawn Mission: The First Private Spacewalk**

SpaceX's upcoming Polaris Dawn mission is set to make history as the first private spacewalk. Scheduled for launch on August 26, 2024, at 3:38 a.m. EDT (0738 GMT), this five-day expedition will be led by American billionaire Jared Isaacman, who previously chartered the Inspiration4 mission in 2021. The mission will utilize a Falcon 9 rocket and the Crew Dragon capsule, Resilience, for its third flight.

## **Schemes and Committees News**

### **Postal Dept launches Deen Dayal SPARSH Yojana to Encourage Philately**

The Department of Post under the Union Ministry of Communication has launched the Deen Dayal SPARSH Yojana to promote research and scholarship in philately among students across India. Announced by the Postmaster General of North Gujarat Region, Ahmedabad, Krishna Kumar Yadav, during the closing ceremony of the 'The Ideal and Great Stamps' Paintings exhibition, the scheme aims to foster the hobby of stamp collection among children.

## **Summits & Conference News**

### **Two-Day India-EU Regional Conference**

The European Union (EU) and the External Affairs Ministry are organising a regional conference in New Delhi to discuss emerging threats in online radicalisation and to jointly counter the exploitation of online spaces by terrorists.

## **Awards & Honors News**

### **RGIA Clinches Best Airport Award for Third Consecutive Year**

The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Hyderabad has once again been recognized as the Best Airport at the prestigious India Travel Awards, marking its third consecutive win in this category.

### **President Murmu Gives Away First-Ever Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar**

President Droupadi Murmu presided over the first-ever investiture ceremony for the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar (National Science Awards). These awards, instituted last year to replace all existing science accolades, mark a new chapter in recognizing scientific excellence in the country.

### **National Geoscience Awards 2023: Honoring Excellence in Earth Sciences**

President Droupadi Murmu presided over a distinguished ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi to confer the prestigious 2023 National Geoscience Awards to outstanding individuals and teams in the field of geosciences. The highlight of the event was the presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award to Prof. Dhiraj Mohan Banerjee, Emeritus Scientist at the Indian National Science Academy (INSA).

**11th Puthiya Thalaimurai Tamilan Awards**

The 11th edition of the Puthiya Thalaimurai Tamilan Awards recently honored outstanding individuals across various fields, recognizing both seasoned professionals and emerging talents. This prestigious event showcased the rich diversity of accomplishments in Tamil Nadu and beyond.

**Important Dates News****National Space Day 2024: A Celebration of India's Space Achievements**

India is set to commemorate its first National Space Day in 2024, marking a historic milestone in the nation's journey of space exploration. Spearheaded by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), this day represents a momentous occasion to celebrate India's growing prominence in the global space community. National Space Day is not merely a reflection on past triumphs but a forward-looking event aimed at inspiring future generations and underscoring the pivotal role of space science and technology in shaping our world.

**Sports News****India's Participation in the 2024 Paris Paralympics**

The Paralympic Committee of India has made a significant announcement regarding the country's representation at the upcoming 2024 Paris Paralympics. This article delves into the details of India's participation, the event's background, and the nation's historical performance in the Paralympic Games.

**ICC Moves Women's T20 World Cup 2024 to UAE Due to Bangladesh Unrest**

The ICC has announced the relocation of the Women's T20 World Cup 2024 from Bangladesh to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) due to significant safety concerns. The event, originally set to be hosted in Bangladesh, will now take place from October 3 to 20 in Dubai and Sharjah. This decision follows a series of political upheavals in Bangladesh, including unrest and the flight of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, which led to travel advisories from several participating countries.

**Germany Captain Ilkay Gundogan Announces International Retirement from Football**

Ilkay Gundogan, the 33-year-old captain of the German national football team, has officially announced his retirement from international football. This decision comes on the heels of Germany's performance at Euro 2024, where Gundogan led his country to the quarterfinals before falling to the eventual champions, Spain, in extra time.

**Neeraj Chopra Finishes Second in Lausanne Diamond League**

Neeraj Chopra, India's star javelin thrower, showcased his resilience and skill at the Lausanne Diamond League meet. Despite facing challenges, Chopra secured a commendable second-place finish, marking another significant achievement in his illustrious career.

**26th CEAT Cricket Awards 2024: Celebrating Excellence in Cricket**

Rohit Sharma, the captain of the Indian men's cricket team, was bestowed with the coveted CEAT International Cricketer of the Year Award. This recognition came on the back of his exemplary performance in the 2023-24 season.

**Diana Pundole: First Indian Woman Racer to Win National Championship**

Diana Pundole, a teacher and mother from Pune, has made history as the first Indian woman to win the national championship in the saloon category at the MRF Indian National Car Racing Championship 2024 held in Chennai. Her achievement is especially notable as it comes in a sport traditionally dominated by men, highlighting her determination and skill despite numerous challenges.

**Shikhar Dhawan Announces Retirement from International Cricket**

Indian cricket's prolific white-ball opener, Shikhar Dhawan, has officially announced his retirement from international cricket at the age of 38. While stepping away from representing India, Dhawan hinted at his intention to continue participating in league cricket, most notably the Indian Premier League (IPL).

**Obituaries News****ICG DG Rakesh Pal Dies of Cardiac Arrest**

Director General of the Indian Coast Guard, Rakesh Pal, died of a severe cardiac arrest in Chennai. He was 59. He was in Chennai to participate in the Coast Guard function led by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

**Indian Army Mourns The Loss Of General S Padmanbham**

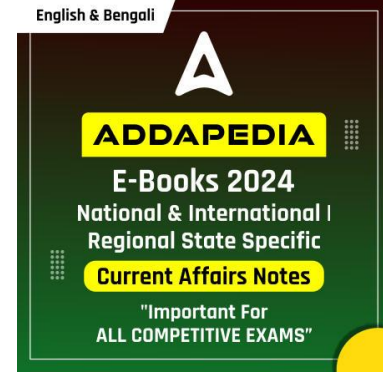
Former Chief of Army Staff General Sundararajan Padmanabhan, who passed away at his Chennai residence on August 19, was cremated with full military honours at Besant Nagar on August 20. The Indian Army bid a solemn farewell to the late Gen S Padmanabhan, who died at 83 due to age-related ailments.

**Defence News****Army Chief General Chairs High-Level Meeting**

Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi on August 20, chaired a high-level meeting focusing on the ongoing transformational initiatives by the Indian Army and its contribution towards achieving the objective of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

**Books & Authors News****Soumya Swaminathan Releases Autobiography of Activist Kalpana Sankar**

In a significant event celebrating women's empowerment and social entrepreneurship, Dr. Kalpana Sankar's autobiography, "The Scientist Entrepreneur: Empowering Millions of Women", was unveiled at Cathedral Road. The book launch brought together notable figures from various fields, highlighting the impact of grassroots initiatives on women's economic empowerment and community development.

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