

## Weekly Current Affairs-21st To 26th October 2024 English

## National News

**First-Ever Coal Gallery Inaugurated at National Science Centre, New Delhi**

Union Culture and Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Minister of State for Coal and Mines Satish Chandra Dubey inaugurated the first-ever coal gallery at the National Science Centre in New Delhi. The exhibition, titled "Black Diamond – Unveiling the Depths," highlights coal's journey from its formation to its essential role in modern energy production. Through immersive displays, the gallery educates visitors on coal extraction, mining technologies, environmental practices, and future innovations in sustainable energy.

**Saharanpur, Rewa, and Ambikapur Airports Launched by PM Modi**

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated three new airports developed under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) – UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh today. The newly inaugurated airports are located in Rewa (Madhya Pradesh), Ambikapur (Chhattisgarh), and Saharanpur (Uttar Pradesh).

**Discovery of 16th Century Copper Plates in Tiruvallur District**

A significant archaeological discovery has been made at the Sri Singeeswarar temple in Mappedu village, Tiruvallur district, where a set of copper plate inscriptions dating back to the 16th Century CE were found. During a routine check of the temple's lockers, overseen by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR and CE) Department, officials uncovered two leaves of copper plates strung together with a ring featuring the seal of the Vijayanagara Kingdom. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) confirmed that the inscriptions, engraved in 1513 during the reign of King Krishnadevaraya, are written in Sanskrit using the Nandinagari script.

**Launch of Bharat Chana Dal Phase II by Union Minister Pralhad Joshi**

Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Shri Pralhad Joshi has launched the retail phase of Bharat Chana Dal Phase II in Delhi-NCR, marking a significant step in the government's commitment to provide essential food items at affordable prices. This initiative includes flagging off mobile vans from NCCF, NAFED, and Kendriya Bhandar to facilitate the distribution of pulses during the festive season.

**Rajiv Ranjan Singh to Inaugurate 21st Livestock Census**

The Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh, also known as Lalan Singh, is set to launch the 21st Livestock Census operation, a significant initiative aimed at gathering comprehensive data on India's

livestock sector. The launch event is scheduled for October 25, 2024 at Hotel Leela Ambience Convention in Shahdara, New Delhi.

**₹200 Crore Census Aims to Boost Livestock Sector in India**

Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh launched the 21st Livestock Census on Friday, which will be conducted until February next year at a cost of ₹200 crore. He emphasized that the collection of precise data is crucial for the government to formulate effective policies aimed at ensuring animal health security and promoting growth in the livestock sector.

## International News

**Subianto Announces Indonesia's Largest-Ever Cabinet**

Newly inaugurated President Prabowo Subianto has unveiled Indonesia's largest-ever Cabinet, comprising 109 members. Named the "Red and White Cabinet" after Indonesia's flag, this lineup reflects his vision of a strong, unified government. Subianto, who was sworn in on Sunday, seeks to unite the nation's multicultural fabric and diverse political interests. Analysts, however, have noted that the expanded Cabinet might overburden the bureaucracy.

**India Doubles Grant to Enhance Education in Sri Lanka's Plantation Sector**

India has increased its grant for upgrading schools in Sri Lanka's plantation areas, raising its total commitment to Rs. 600 million (INR 172.25 million). This initiative is aimed at improving educational infrastructure in the Indian-origin Tamil community, with the focus on nine schools across Central, Uva, Sabaragamuwa, and Southern Provinces. The move strengthens India-Sri Lanka bilateral ties in education, continuing the legacy of development cooperation initiated in previous years.

**Hurricane Oscar Hits Cuba, Triggers Protests Amid Economic Crisis**

Hurricane Oscar made landfall in the Bahamas before crossing Cuba's eastern coast, leaving at least six dead and causing widespread destruction. The storm triggered power outages that halted daily activities, prompting protests in neighborhoods like Santos Suárez and central Havana. Residents banged pots and pans, while some blocked streets in protest over water shortages. The blackout followed energy issues that have persisted since Hurricane Ian in 2022.

**Pakistan Limits Chief Justice's Term to Three Years**

On October 21, Pakistan enacted the Constitution (26th Amendment) Act, 2024, limiting the Chief Justice's tenure to three years and establishing a special commission for appointing the top judge from three senior-most Supreme

Court judges. The amendment received President Asif Ali Zardari's assent after being passed by both Houses of Parliament amid strong opposition from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, led by former Prime Minister Imran Khan. This legislation prevents Justice Masoor Ali Shah from succeeding current Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa, who is set to retire on October 25.

### **NCGG Completes 34th Training for Maldivian Civil Servants, Boosting Indo-Maldivian Ties**

The National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) has successfully concluded its 34th Capacity Building Programme (CBP) for Maldivian civil servants in New Delhi. Held from October 14–25, 2024, this two-week program, organized in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), represents the second initiative under a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and Maldives' Foreign Minister Mr. Moosa Zameer. The MoU, effective from 2024 to 2029, aims to train 1,000 Maldivian civil servants, reinforcing India's commitment to enhancing governance across the Maldives.

## State News

### **Haryana Becomes First State to Implement Dalit Sub-Quotas**

In a landmark move, Haryana has become the first state to implement sub-quotas for the Dalit community by subclassifying the Scheduled Castes (SCs). The decision follows the Supreme Court's August 2023 ruling, granting states the power to divide SCs and STs for preferential reservations. Haryana's move, backed by a state commission's recommendations, is aimed at addressing the underrepresentation of the "Deprived Scheduled Castes" (DSC), who are more marginalized in employment sectors compared to "Other Scheduled Castes" (OSC). The state has divided the SC community into two groups: DSC, which includes 36 castes like Balmikis and Dhanaks, and OSC, which includes castes such as Chamars and Jatavs.

### **Madhya Pradesh Introduces 'Pink Alarms' for Enhanced Women's Safety at Datia Hospital**

In a pioneering move aimed at enhancing the safety of women in healthcare settings, Madhya Pradesh has installed 'pink alarms' at the government-run district hospital and medical college in Datia. This initiative addresses growing concerns about the safety of female staff in public hospitals, a pressing issue that gained heightened attention following the tragic rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

### **New Citizen Sentinel App Unveiled in Kerala for Traffic Monitoring**

In a significant move to enhance traffic law enforcement, Kerala's Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) has launched the Citizen Sentinel mobile application, empowering citizens to actively participate in ensuring road safety. The app allows users to report traffic violations in real time by capturing photos or videos of infractions and uploading them for review by enforcement officials.

### **Odisha Govt Increases Casual Leave for Women Employees**

In a significant move, the Odisha government has announced an increase in the casual leave (CL) entitlement for women employees, granting an additional 12 days annually, effective immediately. This brings their total CL to 27 days, compared to 15 days for male employees. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi directed the increase, following Deputy CM Pravati Parida's earlier Independence Day announcement of one paid menstrual leave per month for women staff.

### **Shillong Tops Travel Destinations for Indian Travellers in 2025**

Shillong has emerged as the most popular destination for Indian travellers in 2025, as revealed by Skyscanner's "Travel Trends Report" released on Wednesday. Meghalaya's capital topped the list, surpassing Baku (Azerbaijan) and Langkawi (Malaysia), showing a strong interest among Indians for unique and immersive experiences. The report indicates that 66% of Indians plan to travel more in the coming year.

### **Delhi Government Establishes Special Courts for People with Disabilities**

In a significant move towards inclusivity, the Delhi government, led by Chief Minister Atishi, has approved the establishment of special courts dedicated to people with disabilities. This initiative aims to provide fair and swift justice by designing court environments that cater specifically to the needs of individuals with disabilities. Atishi described this as a "historic step" that underscores the government's commitment to ensuring equitable judicial processes for all citizens.

### **Bihar CM Unveils Rs 7,160 Cr for Panchayat Development**

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for a range of development projects totaling Rs 7,160 crore. Among these initiatives are 2,615 panchayat government buildings spread across various blocks in the state and a new panchayat resource center in Sonepur, Saran district.

### **ADB Approves \$434M Loan for 500 MW Solar Plant in Assam**

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has sanctioned a USD 434.25 million loan to support Assam's renewable energy ambitions by constructing a 500 MW grid-connected solar

photovoltaic (PV) facility in the Karbi Anglong district. The Assam Solar Project aims to significantly enhance the state's renewable energy capacity, bolstering energy security and promoting sustainable energy development in the region.

### International Gita Mahotsav 2024: A Celebration of Culture, Spirituality, and Global Unity

A Grand Cultural Event The International Gita Mahotsav will be celebrated from November 28 to December 15, 2024, in Kurukshetra, Haryana, promising a grand display of Indian heritage, spirituality, and culture. Since 2016, this event has expanded globally, spreading the message of the Bhagavad Gita and enhancing Haryana's global presence.

### NTPC & Indian Army Collaborate for Sustainable Energy in Ladakh

NTPC has teamed up with the Indian Army to establish a solar hydrogen-based microgrid at Chushul, Ladakh, aimed at ensuring a stable power supply for off-grid Army locations using green hydrogen. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for this innovative project through video conferencing. This initiative is significant in replacing existing diesel generators with a sustainable energy solution capable of providing 200 kW of power year-round, despite the region's harsh winter conditions where temperatures can drop to -30°C at an altitude of 4,400 meters.

## Economy News

### Global Public Debt Set to Exceed \$100 Trillion, Warns IMF

According to a report released by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the world's total public debt is poised to surpass \$100 trillion this year for the first time. The IMF warns that this figure may rise even more rapidly than previously anticipated, driven by political sentiment favoring increased spending and the growing borrowing needs associated with slow economic growth.

### NIPFP Lowers India's FY25 GDP Growth Estimate to 6.9-7.1%

The National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) has revised its growth forecast for India to 6.9-7.1% for FY25, citing a notable moderation in growth during the June quarter. This slowdown is attributed to a significant contraction in net exports and reduced government consumption due to the implementation of the model code of conduct.

### Mudra Loan Limit Doubled to Rs 20 Lakh: A Boost for Entrepreneurs

The government has doubled the limit of Mudra loans under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh, introducing a new 'Tarun Plus' category. This change, announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her July 2024 Budget speech, aims to promote

entrepreneurship and support emerging business owners. The increase is designed to empower budding entrepreneurs who have successfully repaid previous loans under the existing Tarun category, furthering the government's commitment to "Funding the Unfunded".

## Rankings & Reports News

### Economic Freedom of the World: 2024 Annual Report

The Economic Freedom of the World: 2024 Annual Report evaluates the extent to which individuals in 165 jurisdictions can make their own economic choices. According to the latest data from 2022, the top three most economically free regions are Hong Kong (1st), Singapore (2nd), and Switzerland (3rd). The report indicates a global decline in economic freedom over the past three years, reversing a trend of improvement that lasted nearly two decades.

## Business News

### Adar Poonawalla Acquires 50% Stake in Karan Johar's Dharma Productions

In a significant development within the Indian entertainment industry, Adar Poonawalla, CEO of the Serum Institute of India, has entered into a binding agreement to acquire a 50% stake in Karan Johar's renowned production house, Dharma Productions, and its digital arm, Dharmatic Entertainment. The deal, valued at ₹1,000 crore, represents a landmark partnership between two major entities from vastly different industries: cinema and pharmaceuticals.

### Reliance and Nvidia Partner to Build AI Infrastructure in India

Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries has teamed up with US chipmaker Nvidia to establish AI infrastructure in India, announced during the Nvidia AI Summit 2024 in Mumbai. This collaboration aims to position India as a leading intelligence market, with plans to deploy Nvidia's GB 200 supercomputer technology for large-scale AI capabilities. The initiative emphasizes India's vast IT talent, digital data, and a youthful population, aligning with Prime Minister Modi's vision of self-sufficiency in AI development.

### Hindalco Industries Ltd. Joins the International Copper Association (ICA) as Newest Member

The International Copper Association (ICA) is a prominent global industry body that brings together major copper producers worldwide. Representing 50% of the world's copper production, ICA is a not-for-profit trade association comprising 33 member organizations spanning six continents. With its headquarters in Washington, D.C., the ICA has operational footprints across the United States, Europe, Asia, and Latin America, advocating sustainable and responsible copper production practices.

**IIM Shillong and SIDBI Collaborate to Foster Northeast Entrepreneurship**

In a significant step to bolster entrepreneurship in India's Northeast, the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Shillong has partnered with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). Through its IIM Shillong Foundation for Incubation and Enterprise (IIMSFIE), this collaboration introduces a structured entrepreneurship training and incubation programme.

**Nvidia Overtakes Apple A New Leader in Market Value**

Nvidia has officially dethroned Apple as the world's most valuable company, achieving this milestone on Friday after a remarkable surge in its stock price driven by soaring demand for its cutting-edge supercomputing AI chips. At one point, Nvidia's market value soared to an impressive \$3.53 trillion, just edging out Apple, which was valued at \$3.52 trillion, according to data from LSEG.

**Airbus Launches State-of-the-Art Headquarters and Training Centre in India**

Airbus has inaugurated its new India and South Asia Headquarters and Training Centre, marking a significant investment in the Indian aerospace sector. Located in the National Capital Region (NCR), this facility is poised to play a key role in training pilots and technicians and expanding Airbus's industrial footprint in India. The centre is equipped with four A320 simulators and boasts a capacity to train up to 800 pilots and 200 technicians annually.

**EIB Funds ₹2,800 Cr for Bengaluru Suburban Railway to Enhance Urban Mobility**

The European Investment Bank (EIB Global) has announced a significant loan of €300 million (approximately ₹2,800 crore) for the construction of a new suburban railway network in Bengaluru. This initiative aims to build four dedicated rail corridors covering 149 km, with plans for 58 stations and two depots. EIB Vice-President Nicola Beer highlighted that this project will facilitate a shift from road to rail, effectively tackling issues like congestion, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions while enhancing affordable mobility for residents.

**Agreement News****Vijaya Kishore Rahatkar Appointed as Chairperson of NCW**

Smt. Vijaya Kishore Rahatkar has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW), making her the 9th individual to hold this esteemed position. The announcement was made by the Narendra Modi government, highlighting a commitment to advancing women's rights and issues in India.

**Abhyuday Jindal Named New President of Indian Chamber of Commerce**

The Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC), a prominent national business association, has appointed Abhyuday Jindal, Managing Director of Jindal Stainless Limited, as its new president. The announcement was made during ICC's annual plenary session held in New Delhi, where Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal served as the chief guest.

**India-Pakistan Extend Kartarpur Corridor Agreement for Five Years**

In a significant diplomatic development, India and Pakistan have agreed to renew their pact on the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for an additional five years, just days after External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Islamabad, where he met with Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

**EC Signs Electoral Cooperation Pact with Uzbekistan**

The Election Commission of India signed an agreement for electoral cooperation with Uzbekistan's central poll body. This agreement was formalized during Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar's visit to Tashkent, where he is serving as an international observer for the upcoming elections scheduled for October 27.

**Appointment News****Vikram Dev Dutt Takes Charge as Coal Secretary**

Vikram Dev Dutt, a 1993-batch IAS officer from the AGMUT cadre, has officially assumed the role of Coal Secretary. Previously serving as the Director General of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Dutt takes over from VL Kantha Rao, who held the additional charge after Amrit Lal Meena was appointed as the Chief Secretary of Bihar. With India's power demand projected to grow by 6-7% annually, Dutt faces the significant challenge of enhancing coal production to meet the rising needs of the Power and Industrial sectors.

**ECI Appoints Ajay Kumar Singh as Jharkhand's New DGP Ahead of Elections**

Ajay Kumar Singh, a senior IPS officer, has been appointed as the new Director General of Police (DGP) for Jharkhand. His selection comes from a panel of three IPS officers recommended by the State Government, following the Election Commission's order for the immediate removal of acting DGP Anurag Gupta.

**Prabhakar Raghavan, IIT-Madras Alumnus Appointed as Google's Chief Technologist**

Prabhakar Raghavan, an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-Madras), has been appointed as

Google's Chief Technologist. He was previously the Senior Vice President at Google, responsible for overseeing a broad spectrum of products including Google Search, Assistant, Geo, Ads, Commerce, and Payments. His new role marks a significant shift in Google's leadership, especially as the company undergoes core business restructuring.

#### **JP Morgan Chase India Appoints Pranav Chawda as New CEO**

Pranav Chawda has been appointed as the new chief executive officer (CEO) of JP Morgan Chase India for a term of three years. Previously heading the commercial banking unit of the US-based JP Morgan, Chawda's appointment comes after receiving the necessary approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). His leadership is expected to drive the bank's growth and strategic initiatives in the Indian market.

#### **Dr. Neena Malhotra Appointed Ambassador to Sweden**

The Government of India has appointed Dr. Neena Malhotra as the next Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Sweden. Currently serving as an Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of External Affairs, Dr. Malhotra is an esteemed Indian Foreign Service officer from the 1992 batch.

She has a distinguished career, having previously served as the Indian Ambassador to Italy, the Republic of San Marino, and the United Nations Organizations in Rome. Dr. Malhotra holds a PhD from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in New Delhi and is expected to assume her new role shortly.

#### **Justice Sanjiv Khanna Appointed as 51st Chief Justice of India**

In a major judiciary update, Justice Sanjiv Khanna has been appointed as the 51st Chief Justice of India (CJI), with his oath-taking ceremony set for November 11, 2024. His appointment follows CJI DY Chandrachud's recommendation and was confirmed by President Droupadi Murmu. Justice Khanna will serve as CJI until his retirement on May 13, 2025, holding a tenure of approximately 183 days.

#### **Amitabh Chaudhry Re-Appointed as MD and CEO of Axis Bank by RBI**

Axis Bank has officially announced the re-appointment of Amitabh Chaudhry as its Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer for a new three-year term, effective from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2027.

#### **Asia Clean Energy Summit 2024**

The Asia Clean Energy Summit (ACES), a cornerstone event of the annual Singapore International Energy Week (SIEW), is held on the 11th edition from October 22-24, 2024, in Singapore. This premier conference and exhibition brings together experts, innovators, and policymakers to advance clean energy solutions in Asia.

#### **Bhupendra Patel Inaugurates 17th Urban Mobility India Conference & Expo 2024**

Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel inaugurated the 17th Urban Mobility India Conference & Expo-2024 today at the Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The event, running from October 25 to 27, 2024, gathers over 2,000 professionals and academics to discuss the future of urban transport in India. The conference focuses on the theme "Standardisation and Optimisation of Urban Transport Solutions," aiming to enhance urban mobility through integrated strategies and innovative practices.

### Banking News

#### **Freo Secures IRDAI License to Expand Insurance Offerings**

Freo, the digital finance application, has received a corporate agent license from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), allowing it to offer a range of customized insurance products to its 25 million users. This initiative comes amid India's low insurance penetration rate of approximately 4.2%, which is significantly below the global average of 7%. With a commitment to "Insurance For All By 2047," Freo aims to provide affordable and intuitive insurance solutions to address the needs of its diverse user base, particularly in Tier II and III cities.

#### **RBI Updates Alert List of Unauthorized Forex Trading Platforms**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has expanded its 'Alert List' of unauthorized forex trading platforms by adding 13 new entities, bringing the total to 88. This list includes names of entities not authorized to deal in forex under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) or to operate electronic trading platforms (ETPs) for forex transactions. Some notable additions to the list include TDFX, Inefex, and Ranger Capital. The RBI emphasized that this Alert List also includes entities promoting unauthorized platforms through advertisements or claiming to offer training/advisory services.

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special courts dedicated to people with disabilities. This initiative aims to provide fair and swift justice by designing court environments that cater specifically to the needs of individuals with disabilities. Atishi described this as a “historic step” that underscores the government’s commitment to ensuring equitable judicial processes for all citizens.

## Science & Technology News

### IIT Madras Set to Launch International Research Centre in Dubai by 2025

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has announced plans to launch its inaugural international flagship centre in Dubai, focusing on research, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Set to open in early 2025, this initiative aims to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange between India and the UAE.

### New Snake Species in Himalayas Named After Leonardo DiCaprio

A team of scientists has discovered a new species of snake in the Western Himalayas, naming it *Anguiculus dicaprio* in honor of Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio, recognizing his significant contributions to wildlife conservation.

## Schemes and Committees News

### Government to Extend UDAN Scheme for 10 More Years: Transforming India’s Aviation Landscape

In a landmark announcement on October 21, 2024, Civil Aviation Minister K. Ram Mohan Naidu declared that the government will extend the UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) scheme for an additional 10 years. The decision, made during a special event celebrating eight years of the scheme, reinforces the government’s commitment to enhancing regional air connectivity and making air travel accessible to every citizen of India.

### PM Modi Launches Karmayogi Saptah to Boost Civil Service Skills

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Karmayogi Saptah, or National Learning Week, on October 19, 2024, at the Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi. This initiative is part of Mission Karmayogi, which aims to foster continuous skill enhancement among civil servants, aligning their competencies with the evolving goals of India, especially towards achieving a developed nation by 2047.

### Yogi Adityanath Rolls Out Key Welfare Schemes for Police Personnel on ‘Police Smriti Diwas’

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath unveiled a series of welfare schemes for police personnel, including a substantial

70% increase in uniform allowance and a 25% hike in housing allowance for constables residing in barracks. These significant measures were announced during his address at the ‘Police Smriti Diwas’ event in Lucknow, held in honor of police personnel who have laid down their lives in the line of duty, according to an official statement.

### Mission Basundhara 3.0 Assam’s Push for Indigenous Land Rights

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma officially launched Mission Basundhara 3.0 at an event held at Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra in Guwahati. This ambitious initiative is designed to empower indigenous communities by providing them with formal land rights, ensuring greater security and recognition of their holdings.

### UDAN’s 8th Anniversary: A Transformative Journey in Indian Aviation

Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked the 8th anniversary of the UDAN (Ude Desh ke Aam Nagrik) scheme, celebrating its transformative impact on India’s aviation sector. Launched in October 2016, UDAN aimed to make air travel affordable for the common man and boost regional connectivity. The Prime Minister highlighted the increase in airports and air routes, emphasizing how the scheme has enhanced trade, commerce, and regional growth. Union Home Minister Amit Shah lauded UDAN’s success in making air travel accessible in underserved regions, noting its role in unlocking India’s growth potential.

## Summits & Conference News

### 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to Be Held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Odisha is set to host the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas from January 8th to 10th next year in its capital city, Bhubaneswar. The event, which celebrates the contributions of the Indian diaspora, will take place at Janata Maidan. Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has approved the proposal submitted by the Union Ministry of External Affairs, making Bhubaneswar the venue for this prestigious global gathering.

### Colombia Hosts COP16 Nearly 200 Countries Engage in Dialogue

The two-week United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP16) commenced today in Colombia, bringing together environmental leaders from nearly 200 countries to evaluate historic commitments aimed at halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity. This significant gathering follows the signing of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework by 196 countries, an ambitious treaty designed to protect the planet’s diverse ecosystems.

**2024 BRICS Summit: Expanding Cooperation and New Milestones**

The 2024 BRICS Summit, held in Kazan, Russia, from October 22-24, marks a significant turning point for the group as Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE join its ranks following their inclusion at the 2023 summit. The event centers around the theme, "Strengthening Multilateralism for Fair Global Development and Security," with key discussions on alternative global payment systems, dedollarization, and enhanced cooperation. The summit witnessed the adoption of the BRICS Kazan Declaration, endorsing UN reforms and investigating cross-border financial solutions to reduce reliance on the US dollar.

**India's Linguistic Heritage Celebrated at Pravasi Parichay 2024 in Riyadh**

The 2024 edition of the Embassy's flagship diaspora engagement event, Pravasi Parichay, was inaugurated by Dr. Suhel Ajaz Khan, the Ambassador of India to Saudi Arabia, at the Embassy Auditorium in Riyadh. This week-long cultural celebration kicked off with a specially curated event titled "Classical Languages of India," designed to showcase the country's rich linguistic diversity.

**Awards & Honors News****Actor Darasing Khurana Wins Mahatma Gandhi Leadership Award in UK**

Indian actor and philanthropist Darasing Khurana, 32, has been honored with the prestigious Mahatma Gandhi Leadership Award for his impactful work in raising awareness about mental health issues, particularly in his role as the 'Commonwealth Year of Youth Champion.

**Urmila Chaudhary Honored with Global Anti-Racism Championship Award 2024**

Urmila Chaudhary, a prominent social campaigner from Nepal, has been honored with the prestigious Global Anti-Racism Championship Award 2024. The award was presented by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken during a ceremony held at the Department of State in Washington, D.C.

**María Corina Machado and Edmundo González Urrutia Awarded the 2024 Sakharov Prize**

The European Parliament has announced that María Corina Machado and President-elect Edmundo González Urrutia will be the recipients of the 2024 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought. This prestigious award recognizes their relentless efforts to restore democracy and freedom in Venezuela amidst severe political and economic challenges. The award decision was made by the Conference of Presidents and was publicly announced by European Parliament President Roberta Metsola.

**Important Dates News****World Iodine Deficiency Day 2024, A Comprehensive Overview**

World Iodine Deficiency Day, also known as Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day, is observed annually on 21st October. The primary goal of this observance is to raise awareness about the importance of iodine in maintaining good health and to emphasize the adverse consequences of iodine deficiency, which remains a global public health issue. This article provides a detailed overview of iodine's essential role, the impacts of deficiency, national and global efforts to eradicate iodine deficiency, and the achievements of various programs aimed at ensuring adequate iodine intake.

**Disarmament Week 2024: 24-30 October**

Disarmament Week, starting annually on October 24, coincides with the anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The week-long observance is dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of disarmament and promoting international dialogue to reduce the spread and impact of weapons. It was first called for in the Final Document of the UN General Assembly's 1978 Special Session on Disarmament (resolution S-10/2) and reinforced in 1995 by the General Assembly's invitation (resolution 50/72 B, 12 December 1995) to governments and NGOs to actively participate.

**Global Media and Information Literacy Week 2024, 24-31 October**

Global Media and Information Literacy Week is an annual event observed from 24th to 31st October to raise awareness and celebrate the progress achieved towards Media and Information Literacy for all. During Global Media and Information Literacy Week, stakeholders around the world organize events and UNESCO co-hosts with a Member State the global conference gathering the Media and Information Literacy community.

**United Nations Day 2024: Date, Theme, History, and Significance**

The United Nations Day, celebrated annually on October 24, marks the anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Charter in 1945. This day is a global celebration of the UN's mission to promote peace, security, human rights, and development around the world. In 2024, the United Nations Day once again serves as a reminder of the organization's pivotal role in addressing global challenges and fostering international cooperation.

**World Development Information Day 2024: Date, Theme, History, and Significance**

World Development Information Day is celebrated every year on October 24, coinciding with United Nations Day. This observance was established by the United Nations General

Assembly in 1972, with the primary goal of drawing global attention to development issues and promoting the dissemination of information that supports international cooperation for development. As we approach 2024, the significance of this day continues to grow, highlighting the importance of mobilizing public opinion in support of sustainable development and economic progress worldwide.

#### **Celebrating Dedication: Adarsh Karmayogi Awards by Mines Ministry**

The Mission Karmayogi National Program is a program that seeks to transition the Civil Services from a 'Rule-Based' to a 'Role-Based' approach, prioritizing a citizen-centric governance model. On October 19, 2024, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the National Learning Week, also known as Karmayogi Saptah, which will run from October 19 to October 25.

#### **World Polio Day 2024: Date, History, Theme, and Significance**

World Polio Day is observed annually on October 24 across the globe to raise awareness about the crippling disease, poliomyelitis, or polio. The day underscores global efforts to eradicate the disease and ensure a polio-free world for future generations. Poliovirus, the cause of polio, is a life-threatening virus that can lead to paralysis and, in severe cases, death. There are three types of wild polioviruses: Wild Poliovirus Type 1 (WPV1), Wild Poliovirus Type 2 (WPV2), and Wild Poliovirus Type 3 (WPV3).

#### **International Day of Diplomats 2024: Honoring the Unsung Guardians of Global Peace**

The International Day of Diplomats, celebrated annually on October 24, shines a spotlight on the critical role that diplomats play in shaping international relations, promoting peace, and fostering cooperation among nations. Diplomats work tirelessly behind the scenes, often in complex and challenging environments, to resolve conflicts, negotiate trade agreements, and bridge cultural divides. This day serves as an opportunity to appreciate their contributions to global diplomacy, peacebuilding, and the facilitation of dialogue across borders.

#### **Commemoration of Sardar Patel's 150th Birth Anniversary**

The government will celebrate the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with a nationwide program spanning two years, from 2024 to 2026. Announced by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on October 23, 2024, the initiative aims to honor Patel's monumental contributions to India, particularly his vision in establishing one of the world's most robust democracies and his pivotal role in unifying the nation from Kashmir to Lakshadweep. This commemoration not only recognizes Patel's historical significance but also reinforces the current government's commitment to national unity.

#### **World Day for Audiovisual Heritage 2024, Date, History & Significance**

The World Day for Audiovisual Heritage is celebrated annually on October 27 to honor the efforts of audio-visual preservation professionals and institutions that work to protect our cultural heritage for future generations. Established by UNESCO in 2005, this day highlights the importance of preserving audiovisual materials like films, sound recordings, and broadcasts, which face unique risks such as chemical decay and technological obsolescence.

#### **Diwali 2024 Date and Significance: Is Deepawali On October 31 or November 1?**

Diwali, also known as Deepavali, is one of the most cherished festivals celebrated across India and in Indian communities around the world. Known as the "Festival of Lights," Diwali symbolizes the victory of light over darkness and good over evil. As the festival approaches, there's often confusion regarding its exact date, as the celebration spans several days and dates may vary depending on regional traditions and practices. This year, Diwali will be celebrated on either October 31 or November 1, 2024, depending on the location, with each day having a special ritual dedicated to the gods and goddesses. Below, we explore the festival's dates, timings, significance, and customs in detail.

### Sports News

#### **Liu Yukun, Yang Ji-in Shine as ISSF Athletes of the Year**

China's Liu Yukun, the reigning Olympic champion in the Paris 2024 Olympics, was honored as the athlete of the year by the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF). Also, Korea's Yang Ji-in, was named the female athlete of the year, recognizing her remarkable achievements in the sport.

#### **Bala Devi Becomes First Indian Woman to Score 50 International Goals**

Ngangom Bala Devi, born on February 2, 1990, has etched her name in Indian football history by becoming the first Indian woman to score 50 international goals. Playing as a forward for the Manipur Police and the Indian national team, Devi's journey reflects her dedication and significant contributions to women's football in India. Her recent achievement was celebrated following a goal against Pakistan in the 2024 SAFF Women's Championship, further solidifying her status as a trailblazer in Indian sports.

#### **Railways Triumph Over Indian Oil to Clinch Women's Hockey Title**

Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) won the Senior Women Inter-Departmental National Hockey Championship by defeating Indian Oil 3-1 in the final, held at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium. This win avenges their loss in last year's



summit clash. Indian Oil scored first in the 18th minute through Deepika, but Vandana Katariya equalized for Railways just a minute later. Railways took the lead in the fourth quarter, with captain Navneet Kaur scoring a crucial goal, followed by a final strike from Salima Tete, who was named Player of the Match.

### **Israel Joins Asian Development Bank (ADB) as 69th Member Country**

In a significant development for international financial cooperation, Israel has become the newest non-regional member of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The Manila-based lender announced the news on Friday, marking a major step for Israel in enhancing its global strategic ties and economic outreach. Israel officially joined the Asian Development Bank (ADB) as its 69th member and 20th nonregional member, after fulfilling all necessary membership requirements.

### **Egypt Declared Malaria-Free: A Milestone in Public Health**

Egypt has reached a significant public health milestone by being officially declared 'malaria-free' by the World Health Organization (WHO) on October 20, 2024. This achievement makes Egypt the second country in the world to receive this certification in 2024, following Cabo Verde.

### **Maldives President Introduces UPI Payment Service to Boost Economy**

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu has announced the introduction of India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) to enhance the country's economy by improving financial inclusion and transaction efficiency. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to strengthen ties with India following Muizzu's previous stance against Indian military presence in the Maldives. A consortium led by TradeNet Maldives Corporation will manage the rollout, with government oversight from various ministries to ensure successful implementation.

### **Vietnam Elects Military Leader Luong Cuong as President**

Vietnam's parliament elected army general Luong Cuong as the new state president, marking a significant move to restore stability after a period of political upheaval. The 67-year-old Cuong succeeds To Lam, who briefly held the presidency before assuming the more powerful role of party chief following the death of general secretary Nguyen Phu Trong in July.

### **Karnataka Triumphs at 24th National Para-Swimming Championship**

The 24th National Para-Swimming Championship concluded with Karnataka emerging as the overall champion, amassing an impressive 392 points. The competition saw a fierce battle for the top spots, with Maharashtra finishing a close second with 378 points, and Rajasthan securing third place with 248 points.

### **Deepika Kumari Wins Silver at 2024 Archery World Cup Final in Mexico**

In a remarkable achievement, Deepika Kumari, a four-time Olympian from India, secured the silver medal in the women's recurve event at the 2024 Archery World Cup Final held on October 20, 2024, in Tlaxcala, Mexico. She faced off against Li Jiaman of China in the final but lost the match 6-0. Li Jiaman, who was part of China's silver medal-winning team at the Paris 2024 Olympics, claimed the gold.

### **Kagiso Rabada, Fastest to 300 Test Wickets by Balls Bowled**

Kagiso Rabada has etched his name in cricket history by becoming the fastest bowler to reach 300 Test wickets based on balls bowled, achieving the milestone in just 11,817 deliveries. The South African pace sensation is now among the greats, surpassing legends like Waqar Younis (12,602 balls) and Dale Steyn (12,605 balls).

### **Indian Football Team Climbs to 125th in FIFA Rankings**

The Indian men's football team has made a modest advancement in the FIFA rankings, moving up one spot to 125th, as per the latest update released on Thursday. This progress is attributed to their resilient performance in a recent international friendly against Vietnam, where they managed a 1-1 draw.

Under the guidance of new coach Manolo Marquez, the team is still in search of its first victory, having experienced one loss and two draws since his appointment. Despite this, India's points tally has improved to 1133.78, contributing to their rise in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) standings, where they are now ranked 22nd, just ahead of Vietnam.

### **Sharapova, Bryan Brothers Inducted into 2025 Tennis Hall of Fame Class**

In a prestigious recognition, Maria Sharapova and twins Bob and Mike Bryan were named to the International Tennis Hall of Fame's Class of 2025. The induction ceremony will be held on August 23 in Newport, Rhode Island, where they will be celebrated for their trailblazing achievements and contributions to tennis.

### **Indian Women's Hockey Legend, Rani Rampal Announces Retirement**

Indian women's hockey legend Rani Rampal officially announced her retirement from international hockey on Thursday, marking the end of an illustrious career that spanned over 15 years. Known as the "Queen of Indian Hockey," Rani played 254 international matches and scored 120 goals, leading India to numerous milestones, including the famous fourth-place finish at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

**Ashwin Surpasses Lyon: A Historic Day in the ICC World Test Championship**

In a spectacular performance during the second Test against New Zealand in Pune, Ravichandran Ashwin set a new benchmark by becoming the highest wicket-taker in the ICC World Test Championship (WTC). He started the match just one wicket behind Australian spinner Nathan Lyon, who held the top spot with 187 wickets. However, Ashwin's brilliant bowling helped him overtake Lyon, ending the day with 189 WTC wickets.

**Obituaries News****Ron Ely, TV's Iconic 'Tarzan,' Passes Away at 86**

Ron Ely, best known for his portrayal of Tarzan in the 1960s NBC series, has died at the age of 86. Ely passed away on September 29 at his home in Los Alamos, California. His daughter, Kirsten Casale Ely, shared the news, describing her father as a "hero" and a "magical" influence on those around him. While Ely may not have achieved the fame of earlier Tarzan actor Johnny Weissmuller, he helped shape the modern image of the character, known for its shirtless and loincloth-wearing aesthetics. His passing marks the end of an era for fans of classic television.

**Defence News****Indian Army's Sudarshan Chakra Corps Holds 'Swavlamban Shakti' Exercise**

The Army's Sudarshan Chakra Corps of the Southern Command is currently conducting 'Exercise SWAVLAMBAN SHAKTI' at the Babina Field Firing Ranges near Jhansi, with the primary objective of enhancing combat capabilities through the integration of niche and emerging technologies. The exercise commenced on 17th October, 2024 and is set to continue until October 22, as stated in a defense release.

**India and Oman Conduct Joint Naval Drill 'Naseem Al Bahr' off Goa**

The India-Oman bilateral naval exercise Naseem-Al-Bahr, held from October 13 to 18, 2024, off the coast of Goa, featured the participation of the Indian Navy's INS Trikand and Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft, alongside the Royal Navy of Oman's vessel Al Seeb. The exercise was conducted in two phases.

**India Strengthens Navy with Fourth Nuclear Submarine**

India's fourth nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), designated S4\*, was officially launched into the water at the Ship Building Centre in Visakhapatnam, according to official sources. This advanced submarine represents a significant leap in capability and size compared to its predecessor, INS Arihant

(S2), which primarily served as a technology demonstrator under the Advanced Technology Vessel program.

**Swavlamban 2024: Advancing Naval Innovation and Indigenisation**

The Curtain Raiser Press Conference for Swavlamban 2024, the third edition of the Indian Navy's Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) Seminar, took place in New Delhi on October 22, 2024. Chaired by Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, Vice Chief of Naval Staff (VCNS), the event highlighted the Navy's commitment to showcasing significant advancements in innovation and indigenisation aimed at bolstering India's defense capabilities. Scheduled for October 28-29, 2024, at Bharat Mandapam, Swavlamban 2024 promises to be a larger and more impactful gathering.

**Justice Yahya Afridi Selected as Pakistan's Next Chief Justice Amid Political Unrest**

A special parliamentary committee in Pakistan has appointed Justice Yahya Afridi as the next Chief Justice, bypassing the traditional seniority principle. This decision follows the 26th Constitutional Amendment, which granted the committee the authority to appoint the top judge, replacing the seniority-based elevation system. Afridi was chosen over two senior judges, Mansoor Ali Shah and Munib Akhtar, sparking concerns about deepening political turmoil.

**63rd ITBP Raising Day 2024: Celebrating the Guardians of the Himalayas**

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), one of India's five Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), celebrates its Raising Day on October 24 every year. The ITBP Raising Day commemorates the founding of this elite paramilitary force, which was raised in the aftermath of the 1962 Sino-Indian War. The force is entrusted with the security of the India-China border in the Himalayas and plays a critical role in safeguarding the nation's sovereignty.

**New Missile Testing Range Approved in Andhra Pradesh**

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the establishment of a new missile testing range in Nagayalanka, Andhra Pradesh. This initiative aims to bolster India's defense capabilities, particularly for testing tactical missile systems. The new facility will focus on surface-to-air missiles, anti-tank missiles, and other advanced projects under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

**India-Germany Maritime Partnership Exercise: Strengthening Naval Cooperation**

The Indian Navy and German Navy recently completed their inaugural Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) in the Indian

Ocean, marking a key milestone in naval collaboration. The exercise, held in the Bay of Bengal, included joint operations involving INS Delhi, a guided-missile destroyer from India, and Baden-Württemberg and Frankfurt Am Main, a frigate and replenishment tanker from Germany. This event highlights both nations' commitment to enhancing maritime interoperability and regional stability.

**SIMBEX 2024: Strengthening Maritime Partnership Between India and Singapore**

The 31st edition of the Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) is underway from October 23 to 29, 2024, at the Eastern Naval Command (ENC) in Visakhapatnam. This annual exercise showcases the evolving maritime collaboration between the Indian Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN), furthering the strategic partnership and shared objectives of maritime security and interoperability.

**GRSE's Seventh ASW Ship, 'Abhay', Joins Indian Navy Fleet**

On October 25, 2024, the Indian Navy's seventh Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC), named 'Abhay', was launched at M/s L&T's Kattupalli facility. Built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), this vessel marks a significant addition to India's maritime defense capabilities.

**Chanakya Defence Dialogue 2024 Culminates at New Delhi**

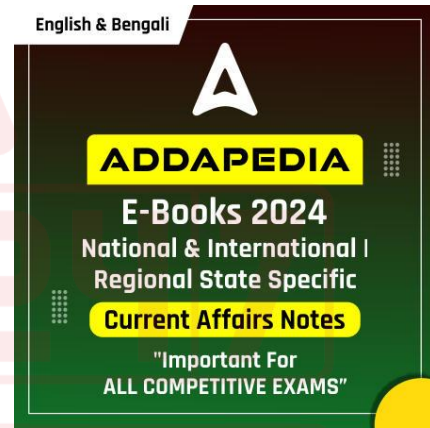
The Chanakya Defence Dialogue 2024 concluded on October 25th at the Manekshaw Centre in Delhi, marking the second edition of this significant international seminar hosted by the Indian Army. The event brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including policymakers, strategic thinkers, academics, veterans, and defense personnel from various countries, all focused on analyzing India's strategic directions and developmental priorities.

**Books & Authors News**

**A Book Titled "Mountain Mammals of the World" By M.K. Ranjitsinh**

Few conservationists in India can claim a legacy as impactful as M.K. Ranjitsinh, whose new book, Mountain Mammals of the World, published by Penguin Random House, serves as a testament to his lifelong dedication to protecting endangered species. As a member of the royal family of Wankaner, Gujarat, Ranjitsinh has played a pivotal role in shaping India's wildlife conservation policies, and his latest literary endeavor reflects the culmination of decades of research, exploration, and unwavering passion for the natural world.

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