

Weekly Current Affairs-18th To 23rd November 2024 English

National News

US Returns \$10 Million Worth of Looted Antiques to India

In a major development, the United States has returned over 1,400 looted artifacts worth \$10 million to India as part of an ongoing initiative to repatriate stolen cultural items from South and Southeast Asia. Among the returned artifacts is a celestial dancer sandstone sculpture, which had been illegally smuggled from central India to London before being sold to a patron of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art.

ALT EFF 2024 Film Festival Returns to Mumbai to Ignite Climate Conversations

The All Living Things Environmental Film Festival (ALT EFF) returns to Mumbai for its 2024 edition, running from November 22 to December 8 at Liberty Cinema. Since its inception in 2020, ALT EFF has become a significant platform for environmental storytelling, bringing global issues of sustainability and climate change to the forefront through cinema. The festival is expanding its reach, with screenings in over 70 cities across India, including villages, fostering a wider conversation on environmental challenges.

UN Lists Chhattisgarh's Bastar Village as Tourism Destination

The small village of Dhudmaras, located in Chhattisgarh's Bastar district, has been selected by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for its Best Tourism Village Upgrade programme. This programme highlights villages with potential for sustainable tourism development and aims to enhance local tourism infrastructure, promote cultural heritage, and improve residents' quality of life.

HMJS Launches "Bhu-Neer" Portal for Groundwater Permits

Shri C.R. Paatil, the Hon'ble Minister of Jal Shakti, digitally launched the "Bhu-Neer" portal during the concluding ceremony of India Water Week 2024. The portal, developed by the Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), aims to improve groundwater regulation in India. The initiative aligns with the Government's focus on transparency, efficiency, and sustainability in groundwater management.

Shivangi Desai Crowned Miss Charm India 2024

Shivangi Desai, a 22-year-old final-year law student at the Indian Law School (ILS) Pune, has made India proud by winning the prestigious Miss Charm India 2024 title. Representing India at Miss Charm 2024 in Vietnam this December, Shivangi's journey showcases a blend of intellect, beauty, and resilience. From a young age, she has excelled in academics, pageantry,

and cultural promotion, cementing her position as a role model for young aspirants.

Prasar Bharati Launches OTT Platform 'Waves'

Prasar Bharati, India's public broadcaster, has launched its own OTT platform 'Waves' at the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI). With a diverse content library, it aims to deliver a mix of nostalgic classics and contemporary programming, making it a hub for family-friendly entertainment. The platform is available on Android and iOS, offering content in over 12 languages and spanning multiple genres such as infotainment, gaming, education, shopping, and live events. This launch marks a significant step toward realizing the Digital India vision, especially for rural audiences, by bridging the digital divide.

PM Modi Gifts Kolhapur's Silofar Panchamrit Kalash to Nigerian President

Prime Minister Narendra Modi presented Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu with a Silofar Panchamrit Kalash, a stunning example of Kolhapur's traditional metal craftsmanship, during his visit to Nigeria. This marks a significant diplomatic gesture, highlighting India's rich cultural heritage and reinforcing the growing ties between India and Nigeria. The kalash, made of high-quality silver, features intricate engravings typical of Kolhapur's renowned metalwork, with designs that include floral motifs, deities, and traditional patterns. This gift reflects both India's artistic legacy and its commitment to cultural exchange with Africa.

India's First Constitution Museum Inaugurated at O.P. Jindal University

India's first Constitution Museum, inaugurated by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on November 23, 2024, at O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU) in Sonapat, Haryana, aims to enhance public understanding of the Constitution. This initiative, launched alongside the National Convention on the Constitution of India, is a tribute to the architects of the Indian Constitution and a celebration of its 75-year journey since adoption.

Indian Army Chief Named Honorary General of Nepali Army

General Upendra Dwivedi, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of the Indian Army, was recently conferred with the title of Honorary General of the Nepal Army by the President of Nepal, Ramchandra Paudel. This honor reflects the deep-rooted historical, cultural, and military ties between India and Nepal. The tradition of honorary generalship between the two nations highlights the strong, enduring friendship and strategic cooperation shared by their armies.

Govt Should Include Coking Coal in Critical Minerals List: NITI Aayog

The NITI Aayog has recommended adding coking coal to India's critical minerals list, emphasizing its importance in steel production and infrastructure development. This aligns with global trends, such as the European Union's declaration of coking coal as a critical raw material. India's heavy reliance on imports (85% of its coking coal) underscores the need to enhance domestic production.

The report "Enhancing Domestic Coking Coal Availability to Reduce the Import of Coking Coal" advocates for policy changes to leverage India's 16.5 billion tonnes of medium coking coal reserves and achieve self-reliance while adhering to Net Zero commitments by 2070.

Gwalior Unveils India's First Self-Sufficient Gaushala with a State-of-the-Art CBG Plant

In a groundbreaking initiative, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's first modern, self-sufficient gaushala in Laltipara, Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. The gaushala, named Adarsh Gaushala, houses a state-of-the-art Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) plant, marking a major milestone in India's journey toward achieving sustainable development and promoting green energy solutions. This project reflects Modi's vision of turning "Waste to Wealth", highlighting how organic waste can be transformed into valuable resources.

International News**Typhoon Man-yi Strikes Northern Philippines**

Super Typhoon Man-yi, locally known as Pepito, has made a second landfall on the Philippines' main island of Luzon, bringing severe winds, torrential rains, and life-threatening storm surges. The powerful storm has caused widespread damage, particularly in Cantanduanes, where it uprooted trees, destroyed buildings, and disrupted power supplies.

Gabon Approves New Constitution in Historic Referendum

Gabon held a landmark referendum, where 91% of voters approved a new constitution, marking a significant political shift in the country. The constitution aims to end 55 years of dynastic rule and reintroduce a democratic civilian government. The ruling military junta, which took power in August 2023 through a coup, orchestrated the referendum, signaling a new era of governance.

Brazil Officially Hands Over G20 Presidency to South Africa

Brazil officially transferred the Group of 20 (G20) Presidency to South Africa during the closing ceremony of the annual G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This marks a historic milestone

as South Africa becomes the first African nation to lead the G20, with a robust agenda planned for its presidency.

Iraq Conducts First National Census in 40 Years

Iraq is conducting its first nationwide census since 1987, under Saddam Hussein's regime, with a significant operation involving 120,000 researchers. This extensive demographic survey, scheduled over two days, will collect data from households across all 18 governorates of the country. To facilitate the process, the Ministry of Interior has imposed a two-day curfew.

Japan and Wales to Partner with Nagaland for Hornbill Festival 2024

Japan has been announced as the official partner country for the 25th edition of Nagaland's renowned Hornbill Festival, alongside Wales, which was confirmed earlier. This strategic partnership, forged through meetings between Nagaland's Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio and Japanese Embassy representatives, including Takashi Ariyoshi and Mayumi Tsubakimoto, marks a significant moment in the state's cultural calendar.

Kenya Cancels Airport and Energy Deals with Indian Tycoon Gautam Adani Amid U.S. Bribery Charges

Kenyan President William Ruto announced on November 21, 2024, the cancellation of multimillion-dollar deals with Indian business tycoon Gautam Adani, citing concerns over bribery and fraud allegations. The decision follows U.S. indictments against Adani, one of Asia's richest men, accusing him of securities fraud and a bribery scheme linked to a solar energy project in India.

This announcement comes amid mounting criticism and protests in Kenya, where Adani's deals were seen as controversial and potentially harmful to workers' rights and job security.

UK and India to Relaunch FTA Talks in Early 2025

UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced the resumption of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations with India, set to restart in early 2025. This decision follows a meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, where both leaders emphasized strengthening their strategic partnership, which covers key sectors such as security, defense, technology, climate, health, and education. The bilateral trade between the two countries stands at GBP 42 billion annually.

Bali Celebrates Hindu Festival of Gratitude

Bali is home to a rich cultural heritage that blends Hindu philosophy, local animist traditions, and Buddhist influences. One of the most important cultural events in Bali is the Ngusaba Goreng, a two-week-long Thanksgiving festival celebrating a

rich harvest. Central to the festival are sacred dances like Rejang Dewa and Rejang Pucuk, which are performed by girls who have not yet reached puberty. These rituals embody the deep spiritual connection between the Balinese people, their heritage, and the divine.

Mali's Junta Replaces Prime Minister Choguel Maiga with Abdoulaye Maiga

The political landscape of Mali witnessed another significant shift on November 21, 2024, as the ruling military junta announced the dismissal of Prime Minister Choguel Maiga. Replacing him is the junta's spokesperson, Abdoulaye Maiga, according to an announcement on state television ORTM. This decision comes amid growing criticism of the junta's handling of the promised transition to democracy and signs of rising tensions within the country's political circles.

State News

University of Wollongong Opens India Campus at Gujarat's GIFT City

In a significant move to expand its global presence, Australia's University of Wollongong (UOW) has officially inaugurated its India campus at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in Gandhinagar. The new campus, offering Master's degrees in Financial Technology and a Graduate Certificate in Financial Technology, marks a strategic entry into the Indian educational landscape, aligning with India's rapidly growing fintech sector. This development comes on the heels of Deakin University's opening of its own campus in GIFT City earlier in July 2024.

Odisha's 24 Coastal Villages Recognised as 'Tsunami Ready' by UNESCO

In a major achievement for Odisha, 24 coastal villages from six districts have been officially recognised as 'Tsunami Ready' by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO. This recognition was granted during the 2nd Global Tsunami Symposium in Indonesia on November 11, 2024, marking a significant milestone in the state's efforts to improve disaster preparedness and community resilience in tsunami-prone areas.

Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve: India's 56th Tiger Reserve

The State Bank of India (SBI), India's largest lender, has successfully raised \$500 million through five-year bonds from international investors. This marks yet another significant milestone for the state-owned banking giant, reflecting its strong global investor confidence and robust credit standing. The issuance was conducted through SBI's London branch and

witnessed overwhelming interest, with bids amounting to \$3 billion, showcasing robust global appetite for Indian debt securities.

Karnataka to Set Up 3 Global Innovation Districts to Boost GCC Growth

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announced the establishment of three Global Innovation Districts (GIDs) in Bengaluru, Mysuru, and Belagavi to attract and support Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in the state. The announcement was made at the 27th Bengaluru Tech Summit, where the CM also highlighted the launch of India's first dedicated GCC policy, aiming to empower innovation. These innovation districts will be key pillars in Karnataka's strategy to foster research, development, and emerging industries, alongside strengthening its position as a global tech hub.

Justice D. Krishnakumar Takes Office as Chief Justice of Manipur HC

On November 20, 2024, the Central Government, via the Ministry of Law and Justice, notified the appointment of Justice D. Krishnakumar from the Madras High Court as the new Chief Justice of the High Court of Manipur. This decision follows the superannuation of Justice Siddharth Mridul, the current Chief Justice of Manipur HC. The appointment was made following recommendations by the Supreme Court Collegium, which emphasized Justice Krishnakumar's legal acumen and integrity.

Telangana Pushes for EV Adoption with New Policy

In an effort to promote environmental sustainability, energy efficiency, and reduce air pollution, the Telangana government unveiled its new Electric Vehicles (EV) Policy on November 17, 2024. Released by state transport minister Ponnampallabharathi, the policy aims to curb pollution in Hyderabad and surrounding areas, ensuring the city avoids severe air quality issues similar to those faced by New Delhi. The policy includes several incentives and measures to encourage EV adoption across the state.

Tamil Nadu's AI Mission: Centre of Excellence to Boost Startups and Academia

At The Hindu AI Summit 2024, Kumar Jayant, Additional Chief Secretary of the Department of Information Technology and Digital Services, announced Tamil Nadu's initiative to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) with an AI lab. This move is aimed at fostering research, development, and supporting startups and academic institutions. The state is also integrating AI into governance, enhancing services in healthcare, agriculture, and public sector monitoring. This strategic shift reflects the state's commitment to leveraging AI's potential for both societal benefit and innovation.

Bihar to Host Khelo India Youth Games and Para Games in 2025

In a landmark development, Bihar will host the prestigious Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG) and the Khelo India Para Games (KIPG) in April 2025, showcasing the state's growing capabilities in hosting major sporting events. This follows the successful organization of the Women's Asian Champions Trophy in Rajgir, further cementing Bihar's reputation in the sports arena. The announcement was made by Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, who emphasized the importance of sports in achieving the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

Karimganj District Gets New Name Sribhumi, Says CM Sarma

On November 21, 2024, the Assam government officially renamed the Karimganj district to Sribhumi, along with its headquarters town, Karimganj, which will now be called Sribhumi town. This move, authorized by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, aims to honor the cultural heritage and historical significance of the region. The name change reflects the longstanding demand from the local people and connects the district to its spiritual roots, as described by Rabindranath Tagore over 100 years ago.

Cyclone Fengal: Heavy Rains Predicted for Tamil Nadu

A potential cyclone named 'Fengal,' suggested by Saudi Arabia, is forming in the Bay of Bengal, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The system, originating as a cyclonic circulation on November 21 near the South Andaman Sea, is likely to evolve into a Low Pressure Area (LPA) by November 23 and intensify into a depression by November 24. This comes on the heels of Cyclone Dana, which severely impacted Odisha in October 2024.

Economy News**Fastest Growing G20 Economy India's 7% GDP Growth Tops G20 Chart**

India has emerged as the fastest-growing economy among G20 countries, with a projected GDP growth rate of 7% for 2024. This remarkable achievement highlights India's economic resilience and potential amidst global challenges. The rankings, released during the ongoing G20 summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, underscore the disparity in growth rates among G20 nations and set the stage for discussions on sustainable development, global governance reforms, and strategies to combat poverty, hunger, and inequality.

India's Unemployment Rate Drops to 6.4% in Q2

In the July-September 2024 quarter, India's urban unemployment rate decreased to 6.4%, marking the lowest

level observed in recent years. The rate has dropped from 6.6% in the previous quarter and remains consistent with the rate recorded in the same period last year. This improvement reflects positive trends in employment, particularly in urban areas, indicating progress in job creation and labor force participation.

Morgan Stanley Cuts India's FY25 Growth Forecast to 6.7%

Morgan Stanley has revised India's FY25 growth forecast from 7% to 6.7% due to weaker-than-expected economic data from Q2, with the economy now projected to grow at a slower 6.3%. Despite this downgrade, the firm remains optimistic about a recovery in the latter half of FY25, anticipating growth to rebound to around 6.7-6.8%, driven by agricultural output and government spending.

Zomato to Replace JSW Steel on BSE Sensex from December 23

On November 22, 2024, the Asia Index Private Ltd, a subsidiary of the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), announced the latest reconstitution of the benchmark BSE Sensex index. As part of this rejig, Zomato, the online food delivery giant, will replace JSW Steel in the 30-stock index. This reshuffling will take effect from December 23, 2024 and includes changes in other indices such as the BSE 100, BSE Sensex 50, and BSE Sensex Next 50.

India's Forex Reserves See Sharpest Weekly Fall in Record, Hit 4-Month Low

India's foreign exchange reserves suffered their largest weekly drop on record, falling by \$17.76 billion to a four-month low of \$657.8 billion for the week ending November 15, 2024. This marks the sharpest decline since records began in 1998, surpassing the previous high of \$15.5 billion during the global financial crisis of October 2008. The primary causes for the fall include the strengthening of the US dollar, the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) intervention to protect the rupee, and declining gold prices.

Rankings & Reports News**India Drops Two Spots in Global Climate Index**

India has maintained its position as one of the top 10 performers in the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2025, despite slipping two spots compared to last year. The report highlights India's commendable efforts in reducing per-capita emissions and its accelerated adoption of renewable energy. Published by Germanwatch, New Climate Institute, and Climate Action Network International, the CCPI assesses 63 countries and the European Union, which collectively contribute to 90% of global emissions.

World Bank Launches 'Jobs at Your Doorstep' Report in Delhi

The Union Minister for Education, Dharmendra Pradhan, along with Minister of Labour and Employment, Youth Affairs and Sports Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, launched the World Bank's report titled Jobs at Your Doorstep: A Jobs Diagnostics for Young People in Six States in New Delhi on November 22, 2024. The report focuses on bridging skill gaps in young people and aligning school curricula with industry needs.

Business News**Moody's Optimistic About India's Economic Growth Despite Volatility**

Moody's Ratings has projected steady growth for India, maintaining its forecast of 7.2% GDP growth for 2024, despite some signs of slowdown in urban demand and mixed corporate results in Q2. The global rating agency highlighted positive economic indicators, including strong household consumption, increased rural demand, robust investment, and manufacturing activity. These factors, combined with government infrastructure spending and rising capacity utilization, support the outlook for the country's economy.

Galaxy Health Insurance Launches 'Galaxy Promise' to Tackle Rising Healthcare Costs

Galaxy Health Insurance has launched its first product, 'Galaxy Promise', offering comprehensive family health coverage with flexible sum insured options ranging from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 1 crore. This product is aimed at providing affordable healthcare solutions amidst rising medical costs, with various plans catering to different customer needs.

Tata Acquires Majority Stake in Pegatron's iPhone Plant in Tamil Nadu

Tata Electronics has secured a deal to acquire a 60% stake in Pegatron's only iPhone plant in India, located in Tamil Nadu. This partnership strengthens Tata's position as a major Apple supplier and marks a significant shift in the geopolitical supply chain dynamics, with India becoming a key hub for iPhone manufacturing. The joint venture will involve Tata handling day-to-day operations, while Pegatron provides technical support. The plant, which employs around 10,000 people, currently produces 5 million iPhones annually. This acquisition places Tata at the forefront of Apple's efforts to diversify its manufacturing away from China.

Meta Fined ₹213.14 Crore Over WhatsApp Privacy Policy: Challenges Loom

Meta has announced its intention to appeal a ₹213.14 crore fine imposed by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) regarding its 2021 WhatsApp privacy policy update. CCI accuses

the company of anti-competitive practices, including forcing users to accept new data-sharing terms, which Meta denies. The ruling could have significant implications for digital platforms balancing user privacy, competition, and business growth in India.

Agreement News**Tata Power and Druk Green Power Collaborate on 5,000 MW Green Energy Project in Bhutan**

Tata Power has entered into a strategic partnership with Druk Green Power Corporation Ltd (DGPC) to develop at least 5,000 MW of clean energy generation capacity in Bhutan. This collaboration aims to harness Bhutan's vast hydropower potential and contribute to the region's energy security and sustainability. The initiative aligns with Bhutan's vision to diversify its energy portfolio and improve regional energy integration.

Tata Power Signs Historic \$4.25B Agreement with ADB

Tata Power, a leading integrated power company in India, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for \$4.25 billion to finance various clean energy projects. This collaboration aims to promote renewable energy sources, improve India's power infrastructure, and contribute to achieving the country's ambitious renewable energy goals. The partnership includes financing for large-scale solar-wind hybrid projects, pumped hydro storage systems, and enhancing power distribution networks.

ISRO and ASA Join Hands for Gaganyaan Mission

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has entered into a significant collaboration with the Australian Space Agency (ASA) to support India's first crewed spaceflight program, Gaganyaan. On November 20, 2024, the two space agencies signed an Implementation Agreement (IA) to enhance cooperation on crew and crew module recovery, which is crucial for the success of the Gaganyaan mission. This agreement will provide India with the necessary assistance to ensure the safe recovery of astronauts in the event of a contingency during the mission.

Appointment News**Harbhajan & Sania Mirza Named Dubai Sports Council Ambassadors**

The Dubai Sports Council has appointed four global sports icons as its Sports Ambassadors, including former Indian cricketer Harbhajan Singh and renowned tennis player Sania Mirza. This initiative aims to enhance Dubai's reputation as a global sports

destination and strengthen its sports ecosystem by attracting prestigious international events, nurturing local talent, and promoting sports tourism.

Valdecy Urquiza Elected New Secretary General of Interpol

Brazilian Federal Police Commissioner Valdecy Urquiza has been elected as the new Secretary General of Interpol at the organization's 92nd General Assembly, held in Glasgow, Scotland, from November 4 to 7, 2024. Urquiza will take over the role from the outgoing Secretary General, Jurgen Stock, on November 7, 2024, marking a significant leadership transition in the world's largest police organization.

Government Appoints K Sanjay Murthy as Next CAG

The government has announced the appointment of K Sanjay Murthy as the next Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India. A 1989-batch IAS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre, Murthy will succeed Girish Chandra Murmu. Currently serving as the Secretary of the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Murthy is set to take over one of India's most significant constitutional roles, responsible for ensuring financial accountability and transparency in public expenditure.

Mithali Raj Appointed Mentor for ACA Women's Cricket Operations

Mithali Raj, the former captain of India's women's cricket team, has been appointed as the mentor for Women's Cricket Operations by the Andhra Cricket Association (ACA). In her new role, she will focus on scouting and nurturing young cricket talent across the state, contributing significantly to the development of women's cricket in Andhra Pradesh.

Banking News

Karnataka Bank Launches Innovative Financial Products for Students

Karnataka Bank Ltd. has introduced two student-focused financial products, 'KBL Peak' and 'KBL Genius', aiming to support students in achieving their academic goals and managing their finances efficiently. These products, launched on World Prematurity Day, enhance the bank's commitment to contributing to India's educational and economic growth by providing financial freedom to students. With 'KBL Peak' offering education loans up to ₹2 crore and 'KBL Genius' featuring a student savings account with free cyber insurance, the bank strengthens its ties with educational institutions across the country.

SBI Horniman Circle Marks 100 Years of Legacy

The State Bank of India (SBI) celebrated the centenary of its iconic Horniman Circle Branch with the unveiling of a specially

minted ₹100 commemorative coin by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The event also featured the release of the 5th edition of The Evolution of the State Bank of India, detailing the bank's transformation between 1981 and 1996. From its humble beginnings with just 100 branches in 1920, SBI today boasts over 22,640 branches, with plans to expand further in FY25. The bank's impressive digital presence, financial inclusion efforts, and significant role in India's banking revolution were highlighted during the event.

India Launches First AI Data Bank to Boost Security and Innovation

India has launched its first Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Bank, a landmark initiative to foster innovation and enhance national security. Announced by Union Minister Jitendra Singh at the 7th ASSOCHAM AI Leadership Meet 2024, this step is part of India's broader strategy to leverage AI for economic growth and governance. The initiative aims to provide researchers, startups, and developers with access to high-quality datasets for creating scalable AI solutions, positioning AI as a key enabler for sectors such as healthcare, space exploration, and national security.

Bima Sugam: A Step Towards a Digital Insurance Ecosystem

The growing concern over mis-selling of insurance products by banks has prompted the introduction of the Bima Sugam platform, a digital initiative by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). IRDAI Chairman Debasish Panda, addressing the issue at SBI's Annual Business & Economic Conclave, emphasized that banks should prioritize their core lending activities and ensure customers are not coerced into buying unsuitable insurance products.

SEBI Abolishes 1% Security Deposit Mandate for Public Issues

In a significant move to enhance ease of doing business, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has abolished the requirement for issuer companies to deposit 1% of the issue size with stock exchanges before launching public issues of equity shares.

This decision, effective immediately, aligns with SEBI's ongoing reforms to streamline market processes and minimize redundant compliance burdens. Previously, the 1% security deposit acted as a safeguard for resolving investor complaints post-issue, but SEBI's circular underscores the redundancy of this requirement due to the evolving regulatory framework.

DPIIT Approves Hinduja Group's IIHL Acquisition of Reliance Capital

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has granted approval for the ₹10,000-crore acquisition of Reliance Capital Ltd (RCAP) by IndusInd International Holdings Ltd (IIHL), a Hinduja Group-backed firm. This marks a

significant development in the resolution of the debt-ridden Reliance Capital, which had accumulated liabilities exceeding ₹40,000 crore. The deal, which has passed through the necessary regulatory clearances, paves the way for the finalization of the acquisition, resolving one of the key challenges facing the troubled financial entity.

RBI Doubles UPI 123Pay Limit to ₹10,000 for Feature Phones

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has raised the transaction limit for UPI 123Pay from ₹5,000 to ₹10,000, enhancing its utility for India's 400 million feature phone users. Launched in March 2022, UPI 123Pay enables digital transactions without internet access through IVR, missed calls, and sound-based payments. Alongside, the UPI Lite wallet limit has been increased from ₹2,000 to ₹5,000 to facilitate small-value transactions. These moves aim to deepen financial inclusion and boost the adoption of digital payments, particularly among underserved populations.

Science & Technology News

NASA Partners with Microsoft to Simplify Access to Earth Science Data

NASA and Microsoft have collaborated to create "Earth Copilot," an AI-driven chatbot aimed at democratizing access to complex Earth Science data. Earth Copilot leverages Microsoft's Azure cloud and advanced AI capabilities to make NASA's extensive geospatial data repository accessible to a broader audience. Traditionally complex and requiring expert knowledge, this data can now be retrieved using simple, plain-language queries, such as assessing the impact of hurricanes or monitoring climate change effects.

SpaceX to Launch India's Communication Satellite GSAT-20

India's heavy communication satellite GSAT-20, weighing 4,700 kg, will be launched from Cape Canaveral, USA, by Elon Musk's SpaceX on November 19, 2024. The satellite, developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), will provide essential communication services, including internet connectivity to remote areas. This marks a significant milestone in India's space endeavors, as the satellite is too heavy for India's own launch vehicle, the LVM-3 "Bahubali".

ISRO's GSAT-N2 Communication Satellite Deployed by SpaceX

On November 18, 2024, SpaceX successfully launched the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) GSAT-N2 communication satellite from Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida. This advanced satellite, designed to enhance broadband connectivity and support India's Smart Cities Mission, was carried aboard SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket. Marking the first commercial collaboration between ISRO and SpaceX,

the launch demonstrates India's growing reliance on international partnerships to achieve its ambitious space and technological objectives.

IISc Introduces STRONG for Nanopore Research

Researchers from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have introduced a groundbreaking language called STRONG (STRing Representation Of Nanopore Geometry), which encodes the shape and structure of nanopores. This new tool is set to revolutionize nanopore research by enabling machine learning (ML) models to predict their properties accurately. Published in the Journal of the American Chemical Society, the development aligns with ongoing advancements in the integration of computational tools and materials science.

Schemes and Committees News

'One Day One Genome' Initiative Unveiled to Unlock India's Microbial Potential

The Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council (BRIC) have launched the 'One Day One Genome' initiative to map and highlight India's microbial wealth. Announced by India's G-20 Sherpa, Amitabh Kant, on BRIC's 1st foundation day at the National Institute of Immunology (NII) on November 9, 2024, the initiative aims to showcase the critical role of unique bacterial species in India's environment, agriculture, and human health. This project will leverage genome sequencing to explore and unlock the microbial world's immense potential for various advancements.

Summits & Conference News

UAE Unveils Energy Efficiency Alliance at COP29

The UAE has announced the establishment of the Global Energy Efficiency Alliance at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan. This initiative aims to double annual global energy efficiency rates by 2030, aligning with the UAE's commitment to reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable resource use. Building on the historic 'UAE Consensus' established at COP28, this alliance seeks to foster international collaboration and innovation in energy efficiency, emphasizing the role of knowledge sharing, partnerships, and investment in achieving sustainability goals.

G20 Rio Summit 2024: A Focus on Global Challenges and Turbulence

The 19th G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro concluded with the adoption of the Rio Declaration, addressing critical global issues such as climate change, the Ukraine war, conflicts in West Asia, and economic inequality. The declaration outlined pathways to sustainable growth, multilateralism, and humanitarian intervention while exposing deep divisions among member nations.

Ayushman Bharat: Vay Vandana Cards Achieves Milestone

On the auspicious occasion of Dhanvantari Jayanti and Ayurveda Day, celebrated on October 29, 2024, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi took a historic step by inaugurating multiple health sector projects worth approximately ₹12,850 crore at the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA) in New Delhi. The event marked a significant moment in India's healthcare sector, with the announcement of free treatment for all senior citizens aged 70 and above, further cementing India's commitment to accessible and affordable healthcare. The newly launched Ayushman Vay Vandana Card has achieved a significant milestone by enrolling more than 10 lakh senior citizens aged 70 and above.

Detailed Outcomes of the 2024 G20 Summit: Rio de Janeiro Declaration

The Rio de Janeiro Declaration, released at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Rio de Janeiro on November 18, 2024, emphasizes several core commitments, including the taxation of billionaires, energy transition, and support for global climate initiatives like COP30 in Brazil. This historic declaration marks the culmination of Brazil's presidency, led by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who outlined the achievements and progressive themes championed during the summit.

Global Hunger and Poverty Alliance Launched By Brazil's President Lula

On November 18, 2024, Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva officially launched the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty during the opening of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro. This landmark initiative, involving 148 founding members, including 82 countries and a variety of international organizations, financial institutions, and NGOs, aims to accelerate efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty globally by 2030.

Sagarmanthan 2024 Charting India's Maritime Future

India's maritime sector stands as a beacon of its economic ambitions and global aspirations. With a 7,500-kilometer coastline, 12 major ports, and over 200 minor ports, the nation handles the lion's share of its trade via the seas, contributing significantly to its GDP. The Sagarmanthan Dialogue 2024 has reinforced India's commitment to becoming a global maritime leader by fostering discussions on sustainability, innovation, and connectivity.

UN Climate Change Conference COP 29 in Baku, November 2024

The 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 29) will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2024. This pivotal event will address crucial issues such as the enhanced transparency

framework, the collective quantified goal on finance, and the next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Armenia Becomes 104th Full Member of International Solar Alliance

Armenia has become the 104th full member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), marking a significant milestone for global solar energy collaboration. The ISA, established in 2015, aims to scale up solar energy adoption, reduce costs, and facilitate innovation. Under India's leadership, the ISA has launched impactful projects worldwide. Armenia's membership highlights its commitment to sustainable energy solutions, contributing to the ISA's goal of mobilizing USD 1000 billion by 2030 for solar energy deployment.

India Hosts First Global Cooperative Conference in 130 Years

India will host the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Global Cooperative Conference in New Delhi from November 25 to 30, 2024. This marks the first time in the 130-year history of the ICA that the global cooperative movement's premier event will be held in India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the United Nations International Year of Cooperatives 2025 during this event.

Awards & Honors News**Victoria Kjaer Theilvig Becomes Denmark's First Miss Universe**

The 73rd Miss Universe pageant held in Mexico marked a historic milestone for Denmark as Victoria Kjaer Theilvig was crowned the nation's first-ever Miss Universe. The 21-year-old from Søborg outshone 125 participants, including India's Rhea Singha, and became a global sensation. With her blend of intelligence, elegance, and advocacy, Victoria made history and inspired millions worldwide.

PM Honored with "Grand Commander of the Order of Niger"

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was conferred the prestigious national award, "Grand Commander of the Order of Niger", by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, H.E. Mr. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, at the State House. This honor celebrates Prime Minister Modi's visionary leadership, transformative governance, and significant contributions to fostering stronger India-Nigeria ties and the aspirations of the Global South.

Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2023: Honouring Daniel Barenboim and Ali Abu Awwad for Peace Efforts

The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development for 2023 was awarded to Daniel Barenboim, a world-famous pianist and conductor, and Ali Abu Awwad, a Palestinian peace activist, on November 19, 2024. This prestigious award recognizes their remarkable efforts to promote peace and non-violence.

Coal India Limited Honoured with Green World Environment Award 2024

Coal India Limited (CIL), under the aegis of the Ministry of Coal, has achieved a remarkable milestone by receiving the prestigious Green World Environment Award 2024 in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) category. Alongside this accolade, CIL was also honoured with the title of Green World Ambassador, reflecting its commitment to sustainability and social welfare. This award recognizes CIL's exemplary efforts in balancing its industrial operations with significant social and environmental contributions.

PM Modi Receives Highest Honors from Guyana and Dominica

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been conferred prestigious awards by Guyana and Dominica in recognition of his significant contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as his efforts in strengthening international ties, especially between India and these Caribbean nations. These awards highlight the deepening diplomatic relations and the global recognition of Modi's leadership in global health, climate resilience, and development cooperation.

PM Modi Receives Global Peace Award in Washington

The Association of Indian American Minorities (AIAM), a newly launched non-governmental organization, was inaugurated on November 22, 2024, at the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church in Maryland, USA. The organization aims to foster unity and uplift minority communities within the Indian American diaspora. During the launch event, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was honored in absentia with the 'Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Global Peace Award for Minority Upliftment', recognizing his efforts in inclusive development and minority welfare.

Important Dates News**World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence 2024**

World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Violence Observed on November 18, this day emphasizes raising awareness about the widespread and devastating issue of child sexual abuse and violence. It aims to promote global action to prevent abuse, provide healing, and uphold the rights and dignity of affected children.

National Integration Day 2024, Honoring Indira Gandhi's Legacy of Unity and Progress

National Integration Day, observed every year on November 19, marks the birth anniversary of Indira Gandhi, the first woman Prime Minister of India. This day is an opportunity to reflect on her enduring legacy and the significant role she played in

shaping India's political, social, and economic trajectory. As the nation continues to evolve into a global power, National Integration Day serves as a reminder of Gandhi's dedication to strengthening the fabric of national unity and integration, an essential aspect of India's continued growth and success.

Celebrating Awaas Diwas 2024: 8th Anniversary of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G)

The Ministry of Rural Development commemorates Awaas Diwas 2024, marking the 8th anniversary of the flagship Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G). Launched on November 20, 2016, by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, this scheme has been pivotal in fulfilling the vision of "Housing for All." The anniversary highlights the achievements, innovations, and continued commitment to transforming rural housing in India.

National Philosophy Day 2024, Date, History, Theme and Significance

National Philosophy Day, also recognized globally as World Philosophy Day, is celebrated every year on the third Thursday of November. This day highlights the profound influence of philosophy in shaping human thought, fostering critical discourse, and addressing contemporary global challenges. In 2024, this day is observed on 21st November. Established by UNESCO in 2002, the occasion underscores the importance of philosophy in promoting intercultural dialogue and questioning assumptions that underpin human understanding.

World Television Day 2024, Celebrating the Power of Television

World Television Day is celebrated every year on November 21 to underscore the role of television as a vital medium of communication. It highlights the profound impact of television in shaping global awareness, influencing decision-making, and fostering education. Beyond entertainment, television serves as a platform to address critical global issues, including peace, conflicts, and social development. The day reminds us of the need to leverage this powerful medium for positive societal change.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's Shaheedi Divas 2024: A Tribute to the Ninth Sikh Guru's

Guru Tegh Bahadur was the ninth Sikh Guru, known for his bravery and sacrifice. He played a key role in shaping Sikhism and stood firmly against injustice. His Martyrdom Day, also known as Shaheedi Diwas, is observed annually on 24th November to honor his ultimate sacrifice for the rights of others.

Sports News**FIFA Unveils NASA-Inspired Trophy for Expanded 2025 Club World Cup**

FIFA has revealed the new 2025 Club World Cup trophy, a golden masterpiece created in collaboration with Tiffany & Co. The trophy, which will be awarded at the first-ever 32-team tournament in June and July 2025, boasts a 24-carat gold-plated finish and intricate engravings symbolizing football's past and future. Inspired by NASA's Voyager missions, the periodic table, and astronomical maps, it signifies a new chapter in the sport's history. Despite backlash over the tournament's expansion, FIFA envisions the trophy as a prestigious symbol for the future of club football.

India Defends Women's Asian Champions Trophy Title with 1-0 Win Over China

India's Women's Hockey Team successfully defended their title at the Women's Asian Champions Trophy, defeating China 1-0 in the final. The victory marked India's third ACT title, showcasing their dominance in the tournament's history alongside South Korea. Deepika's stunning reverse-hit goal in the 31st minute was the difference, securing India's back-to-back championship win.

Nandan Kumar Jha Elected President of International Mind Sports Association (IMSA)

India's Nandan Kumar Jha has been appointed as the new president of the International Mind Sports Association (IMSA), an organization dedicated to the governance and promotion of mind sports globally. This significant announcement was made during the IMSA's annual general assembly held in Sao Paulo, Brazil. With a mission to integrate mind sports like chess, esports, and bridge into the mainstream sports community, Jha's appointment marks a historic moment for India's growing influence in the field of intellectual games.

Eden Gardens to Honour Jhulan Goswami with Stand

India's legendary cricketer Jhulan Goswami is set to receive a remarkable tribute at the iconic Eden Gardens in Kolkata. The Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) has announced that a stand at the venue will be renamed in her honor, marking her as the first woman cricketer to receive this recognition. The official unveiling will take place on January 22, 2025, during the India-England T20I match. This accolade highlights her extraordinary achievements in women's cricket and her continued contributions to the sport.

Italy Clinches Fifth Billie Jean King Cup Title with Paolini's Dominance

Italy claimed its fifth Billie Jean King Cup title on November 20, 2024, defeating Slovakia 2-0 in the final held in Malaga, Spain. Jasmine Paolini's commanding 6-2, 6-1 victory over Rebecca Sramkova sealed the triumph for Italy, following Lucia Bronzetti's 6-2, 6-4 win over Viktoria Hrucakova. The victory marked redemption for Italy after their loss in the previous year's final and further solidified their standing as a dominant force in women's international tennis.

Sony Sports Secures Rights for All ACC Tournaments (2024-2031)

On 22nd November evening, Jay Shah, the ICC president-elect and current chief of the BCCI and ACC, announced a landmark partnership between the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) and Sony Sports Networks. The deal, which will span from 2024 to 2031, will see all ACC tournaments broadcast exclusively on Sony Sports, marking a significant boost for cricket's visibility in the region.

Obituaries News**Former Supreme Court Judge Justice HS Bedi Passes Away at 78**

Justice Harjit Singh Bedi, former Supreme Court judge and ex-Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, passed away at the age of 78. Known for his significant role in reviewing cases of alleged fake encounters in Gujarat, Justice Bedi was an eminent legal luminary who served the judiciary with distinction. His cremation is scheduled for Friday in Chandigarh.

John Prescott, Former Deputy PM of Britain, Dies at 86

John Prescott, one of Britain's most recognized politicians and a champion of the working class, passed away at the age of 86. Rising through the trade union movement, he became deputy prime minister in Tony Blair's government, holding the position for a decade. Known for his plain-speaking style and connection to Labour's roots, Prescott played a pivotal role in modernizing the party while maintaining its traditional values. His career, marked by significant achievements in environmental policy and social justice, left an indelible mark on British politics.

Defence News**India's Hypersonic Missile Test A Leap in Defense Technology**

India has successfully conducted the flight trial of its first long-range hypersonic missile, a significant achievement in the country's defense capabilities. This development places India in an exclusive group of nations with the technology to deploy hypersonic weapons.

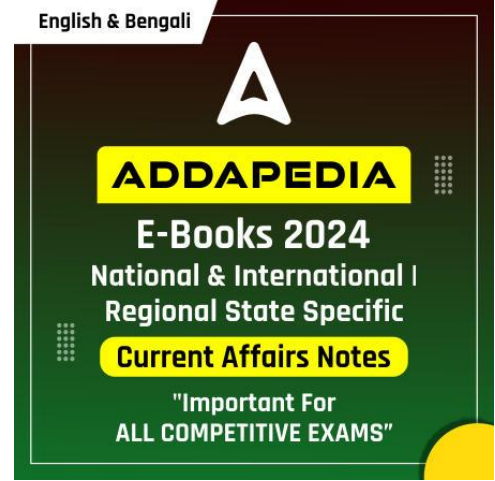
Sea Vigil 24 Culminates A Step Towards Coastal Resilience

The fourth edition of the Pan-India Coastal Defence Exercise, Sea Vigil 24, concluded successfully on 21st November 2024, showcasing India's steadfast commitment to enhancing its maritime security and coastal defense. Conducted over a 36-hour tactical phase, the exercise covered India's 11,098 km coastline and 2.4 million sq. km Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). It involved over 21 agencies across six ministries, strengthening the country's readiness to counter evolving maritime threats.

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