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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Japan becomes second Quad partner to sign semiconductor pact with India

- In a significant move, India and Japan have solidified their partnership by signing an agreement to jointly develop the semiconductor ecosystem. The deal aims to bolster the resilience of the global supply chain, particularly in the crucial semiconductor industry. This marks Japan as the second Quad partner, after the United States, to join hands with India in this endeavor.
- The memorandum signed by Union Minister for Electronics and IT, Ashwini Vaishnaw, and Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry, Yasutoshi Nishimura, encompasses various areas of collaboration. These include semiconductor design, manufacturing, equipment research, and talent development. The ultimate goal is to enhance the semiconductor supply chain's robustness and ensure its reliability.

India, Argentina sign agreements to strengthen cooperation in defence

- The decision was made during the meeting that took place between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and the visiting Minister of Defence of Argentine Republic Jorge Enrique Taiana in New Delhi.
- A MOU on cooperation in the defence sector is already in place between India and Argentina that was signed during former Argentine President Mauricio Macri's visit to New Delhi in February 2019.
- "We are here to perfect and deepen the agreements we have and sign some others. One of them is a Memorandum of Understanding that is richer in content and concrete possibilities than the one currently in force," said Taiana, adding: "I think we have a concrete opportunity in the field of Defence, where we can give a quality leap in cooperation between the two countries".
- During their meeting, the two Defence Ministers discussed issues related to bilateral cooperation and exchange in areas of training and training of officers and cadets besides also measures to enhance defence industrial partnership.

India's Surat Diamond Bourse overtakes The Pentagon as world's largest office building

- A building in India's diamond city of Surat has surpassed The Pentagon to become the world's largest office. Surat in Gujarat state is known as the world's diamond capital, where 90 per cent of the precious stones are cut. It will now house the world's largest office building, the Surat Diamond Bourse, dedicated to the gemstone industry.
- The 15-storey building has more than 7.1 million square feet of floor space, outdoing The Pentagon, the headquarters of the US defence department in Arlington Co, Virginia, which has 6.5 million sq ft. It is 81.9 metres tall and cost 32 billion rupees (\$38 million) to build.

- The Diamond Bourse was designed by Delhi-based Morphogenesis and is based on the concept of Panchtatva, the five elements of nature – water, fire, air, earth and sky.
- “It is the world’s largest building,” Sonali Rastogi, co-founder of Morphogenesis, told The National. “It houses different sizes of offices but are all meant for diamond merchants. There are 300 sq ft to 25,000 sq ft offices. It has been built for the diamond merchant community.”
- The building has a unique design of nine interconnected rectangular structures emanating from a central spine. It can house more than 4,700 diamond offices and 65,000 industry professionals, including cutters, polishers and traders,

Adani group commissions India's first transnational power project to Bangladesh

- Gautam Adani, the chairman of the Adani Group, met with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on July 15 to discuss the handover of the 1,600 MW Ultra Super Critical Godda Power Plant in Jharkhand to Bangladesh.
- Honoured to have met Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina on full load commencement and handover of the 1600 MW Ultra Super Critical Godda Power Plant. I salute the dedicated teams from India and Bangladesh who braved Covid to commission the plant in record time of three-and-a-half years,” Gautam Adani said in a tweet.
- The power plant is located in the Godda district of Jharkhand and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Adani Group. The first unit of the 1,600 MW Ultra Super Critical Godda Power Plant in Jharkhand began commercial operations on April 6, 2023. The second unit followed on June 26.
- APJL will supply 1,496 MW from the Godda USCTPP under the PPA with the Bangladesh Power Development Board, executed in November 2017 for a period of 25 years, via a 400 kV dedicated transmission system connected to the Bangladesh grid, the company said in a statement.

U.K. formally signs up to trans-Pacific trading bloc

- The UK has formally agreed to become the first European country to join a major Indo-Pacific trade bloc, in what marks Britain’s biggest trade deal since Brexit – despite forecasts placing its value at just £1.8bn a year.
- The government’s business and trade secretary Kemi Badenoch signed the accession protocol to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) in New Zealand on Sunday, bringing the bloc’s combined GDP to £12 trillion – 15 per cent of the global share.
- Her signature gives formal confirmation of the agreement reached in March following two years of negotiations, and officials from Britain and the bloc’s 11 other members will now begin work to ratify the deal.

Razorpay launches first international payment gateway in Malaysia through Curlec

- India’s renowned fintech giant and leading Full-Stack Payments and Business Banking Platform, Razorpay, has made a significant announcement regarding its

first-ever international Payment Gateway for the Malaysian market as it acquires Malaysian fintech start-up 'Curlec' for \$20 million, which has been rebranded as 'Curlec by Razorpay'.

- The introduction of the Curlec Payment Gateway aims to bridge the gap between local and international payment gateways, while also addressing the unique digital payment challenges prevalent in emerging markets. Transforming into a Comprehensive Payment Solutions Provider
- By launching the Payment Gateway, 'Curlec by Razorpay' has evolved into a comprehensive provider of payment solutions, leveraging the synergy between cutting-edge technological capabilities and a profound understanding of the local payment ecosystem.

India-Mongolia joint military exercise Nomadic Elephant – 2023 to commence at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

- Indian Army contingent comprising of 43 personnel left for Mongolia today. The contingent will participate in the 15th edition of bilateral joint military exercise "NOMADIC ELEPHANT-23". The exercise is scheduled to be conducted at Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia from 17 to 31 July 2023. Exercise NOMADIC ELEPHANT is an annual training event with Mongolia which is conducted alternatively in Mongolia and India, the last edition was held at Special Forces Training School, Bakloh in October 2019.
- Soldiers of the Mongolian Armed Forces Unit 084 from and Indian Army soldiers from the JAMMU AND KASHMIR LIGHT INFANTRY Regiment will be participating in the exercise. Indian Army contingent reached Ulaanbaatar on 16 July 23 by an Indian Air Force C-17 aircraft. The aim of this exercise is to build positive military relations, exchange best practices, develop inter-operability, bonhomie, camaraderie and friendship between the two armies. The primary theme of the exercise will focus on counter-terrorism operations in mountainous terrain under United Nations mandate.

Saudi Arabia Becomes 51st Country to Ink ASEAN's Amity Treaty

- Saudi Arabia officially inked ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia -- commonly shortened as the TAC -- during the group's ministerial meeting in Jakarta.
- The Middle Eastern country sent its senior diplomat Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud to sign the non-aggression pact. Saudi Arabia also became the 51st nation to accede to the TAC.
- "The [signing] reflects Saudi's strong commitment to abide by ASEAN values and principles as enshrined in the TAC," Foreign Affairs Minister Retno Marsudi said when kicking off the TAC signing ceremony.
- "A commitment to cooperate and collaborate. A commitment to contribute to upholding international laws. A commitment to contribute to peace and stability in Southeast Asia and beyond," she added.

Young Dubai climber, 8, scales Europe's highest peak

- An eight-year-old mountain climber from Dubai is on top of the world after climbing Europe's highest peak. Ayaan Saboor Mendon, who is originally from India, conquered Mount Elbrus alongside his mother, Vani Mendon, and father, Saboor Ahmad.
- Last month, the climber scaled the 5,642-metre-high peak in only five days, after setting a target of eight days.
- It was far from the junior climber's first peak, as he had already reached the top of Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro and Australia's Mount Kosciuszko.
- At 5,642 metres, Mount Elbrus is the highest peak in Europe. It is renowned for being uncompromising, with harsh and unpredictable weather, extreme cold and soft snow, which makes handling heavy gear much more difficult. Compared to Mount Kilimanjaro, the expedition is said to be more challenging.

IIT Delhi will open its international campus in Abu Dhabi (UAE)

- Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan informed that IIT Delhi is going to open its international campus in Abu Dhabi (UAE).
- After IIT Madras, now IIT Delhi is also going to open its international campus outside the country in Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates).
- Earlier, IIT Madras had announced to set up its campus in Zanzibar-Tanzania. Whose work is likely to start from October this year. This initiative will further strengthen the relations between the two countries.
- Meanwhile, IIT Delhi has also announced the inclusion of UAE school students in its Summer Boot Camp, in which talented school students from there will be able to work on their research and other innovations in IIT Delhi's lab. Currently, IIT Delhi conducts such summer boot camps only for Indian school students.
- During the event, Pradhan also handed over a set of books (magic box) designed for school children up to class three under the new National Education Policy (NEP) to UAE Minister of Education Sarah Musallam.

World's largest International Temple Convention and Expo to be organized in Varanasi

- The world's largest International Temple Convention and Expo (ITCX) will be organized from 22 to 24 July 2023 at the Rudraksh Convention Center in Varanasi.
- Conceived by Temple Connect (India), it is the world's first event solely dedicated to the management of temples. The conference will focus on nurturing and empowering the governance, management and operations of the world and temple ecosystem.
- More than 450 temple functionaries from 25 countries are expected to participate in the conference. Along with Hindus, office bearers of Math-Temples and Gurudwaras belonging to Sikh, Buddhist and Jainism have also been invited.
- The conference will be inaugurated by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on July 22. The event will be held at Rudraksh Convention Centre. For the first time, the International Temples Convention & Expo is being organized by Temple Connect.

- The three-day event is being organized as part of the Incredible India campaign in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Tourism. In this, development, empowerment of temple management, operation and administration will be discussed. According to the founder of Temple Connect, best practices will be created for the teams of the leading places of worship in the world.

Four Indian-origin biz leaders in 2023 Forbes' 100 richest self-made women list

- Four Indian-origin women have made it to the Forbes list of America's 100 richest self-made women, with a combined net worth of a \$4.06 billion. Jayshree Ullal, president and CEO of Arista Networks, a computer networking firm; Neerja Sethi, co-founder of IT consulting and outsourcing firm Synte; Neha Narkhede, co-founder and former chief technology officer (CTO) of cloud company Confluent; and Indra Nooyi, PepsiCo's former chair and CEO, are the four Indian-origin women who have been named by Forbes.
- **Jayshree Ullal** - Ranked 15th on the list, Ullal has a net worth of \$2.4 billion. She has been president and CEO of the publicly-traded Arista Networks since 2008 and owns about 2.4 per cent of its stock. Arista recorded revenue of nearly \$4.4 billion in 2022.
- **Neerja Sethi** - Ranked 25th on the list, Sethi, 68, has a net worth of \$990 million. Neerja Sethi co-founded IT consulting and outsourcing firm Syntel with her husband Bharat Desai in 1980 in their apartment in Troy, Michigan. In October 2018, French IT firm Atos SE bought Syntel for \$3.4 billion and Sethi got an estimated \$510 million for her stake.
- **Neha Narkhede** - Narkhede, 38, is ranked 50th on the list with a net worth of \$520 million. As a LinkedIn software engineer, she helped develop the open-source messaging system Apache Kafka to handle the networking site's massive influx of data. In 2014, she and two LinkedIn colleagues left to found Confluent, which helps organisations process large amounts of data on Apache Kafka.
- **Indra Nooyi** - Nooyi, the former chair and CEO of PepsiCo, retired in 2019 after 24 years with the company, half of which she spent in the top job. The 67-year-old has a net worth of \$350 million and is ranked 77th on the list. As CEO, she thwarted a bid to break up PepsiCo, nearly doubled sales and introduced healthier products and environmentally friendly practices. Her fortune stems from stock she was granted while working at PepsiCo.

India secured four gold medals at the 34th International Biology Olympiad

- India topped the medals tally at the 34th International Biology Olympiad (IBO) 2023, held in Al Ain, UAE, from July 3 to 11, by securing four gold medals. For the first time, India has turned in an all-gold performance and topped the medals tally in IBO.
- The student's team this year was Dhruv Advani (Gold) from Bengaluru, Karnataka, Ishan Pednekar (Gold) from Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, Megh Chhabda (Gold) from Jalna, Maharashtra, Rohit Panda (Gold) from Risali, Chhattisgarh.

- The team was accompanied by two leaders, Professor Madan M. Chaturvedi (Former Senior Professor, Delhi University) and Dr Anupama Ronad (Homi Bhabha Center for Science Education, TIFR), and two Scientific Observers, Dr V. V. Binoy (National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru) and Dr Rambhadur Subedi (NIRRH, Mumbai).
- As per the note shared by HBCSE, "There were 293 students from 76 countries in this year's IBO. After India, Singapore was the only other country to secure four gold medals. In all 29 gold medals were awarded. Earlier, India topped the medals tally in Astronomy and Astrophysics (in 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2015, and 2021), Physics (in 2018), and Junior Science (in 2014, 2019, 2021, and 2022)."

Latvia swears in Edgars Rinkevics as EU's first openly gay president

- Edgar Rinkevics, 49, has been sworn in as Latvia's first openly gay head of state, and the first openly gay president of an EU member state, reported Deutsche Welle (DW). Rinkevics vowed to uphold Latvia's support for Ukraine in its war against Russia, as he was sworn in as president.
- "Russia's war and genocide in Ukraine have created a new, harsh reality," the German news agency DPA quoted Rinkevics as saying. He warned of the threats of "imperial Russia and the [Belarus leader Alexander] Lukashenko regime" against the region, Europe and the whole world, as per DW.
- Deutsche Welle is Germany's international broadcaster and media outlet. The speech of the former foreign minister came days before the NATO summit in Vilnius.
- Latvia will stand for a strong and effective NATO, the European Union, a law-based international order and close cooperation with our friends and allies.
- The 49-year-old has held the highest diplomatic position for Latvia since 2011 and has long backed Ukraine against Russian aggression, as per DW.
- After his predecessor, Egils Levits, opted not to seek re-election, the parliament elected Rinkevics to the mostly ceremonial position of president in May. He is now the first openly gay president of an EU member state and the first head of state of Latvia. After being sworn in, Rinkevics gave a speech in which he vowed to work for inclusiveness and equality in Latvia.
- Every person in Latvia, its citizens, must feel that they belong, legally protected and safe," the new president said, DW reported. (ANI) This report is auto-generated from ANI news service. ThePrint holds no responsibility for its content.

India-US conduct 'Operation Broader Sword' to prevent illegal drugs shipment

- In a joint multi-agency operation carried out by the law enforcement agencies of the US and India, more than 500 shipments of "illicit and unapproved prescription" drugs were stopped from reaching US consumers.
- Operation "Broader Sword", which was carried out in June 2023, targeted shipments of illicit, potentially dangerous, unapproved prescription drugs,

combination medical devices, and synthetic drug precursors shipped through International Mail Facilities (IMF), the US Embassy said on Friday.

U.N. Security Council to hold first-ever meeting on threats of AI

- The U.N. Security Council will hold a first-ever meeting on the threats of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on July 18th. The meeting organized by the United Kingdom, will see global leaders discussing the potential threats of artificial intelligence (AI) to international peace and security. It has been presented as a centrepiece of the UK's presidency of the council.
- This was announced by the UK's ambassador to the UN, Dame Barbara Woodward. She said that since becoming Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak has been pushing for a leadership position in the global effort to regulate AI tools. Mr. Sunak had earlier claimed that the UK was the natural place to lead the conversation on AI. He had also announced that Britain will host the first major global summit on AI safety later this year.
- The meeting will include briefings by international AI experts and Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Guterres has been known for speaking up against the risks of new technologies such as AI. The UN chief has revealed plans to appoint a scientific advisory board with expertise in this area. He also said he would react favourably to the creation of a new UN agency on AI with some regulatory powers, similar to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

India joins the Champions Group of the Global Crisis Response Group

- The Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India informed on 7 July 2023 that India has been included in the "Champions Group" of the Global Crisis Resolution Group (GCRG).
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been invited by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. UN Secretary-General Guterres established the Global Crisis Response Group (GCRG) in March 2022 to address urgent and critical global issues such as food and energy security challenges.
- About: Champions Group - Champions Group maintains GCRG. It includes the Heads of State and Government of Bangladesh, Barbados, Denmark, Germany, Indonesia and Senegal. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, the decision to join the grouping reflects India's growing global leadership and commitment to address current global challenges. India's participation will further strengthen the efforts of the United Nations in finding result-oriented solutions to development issues affecting the world, especially developing countries

Ozone UV Bulletin' released by WMO

- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) issues Ozone and UV bulletins at an interval of seven years. According to which the ozone layer is continuously improving
- To monitor and understand changes in the ozone layer, WMO has released its first Ozone and UV Bulletin. According to the information given by WMO, with

the help of Montreal Protocol and amendments made from time to time, the use of substances that damage the ozone layer has been limited by 99 percent.

- The Montreal Protocol is an international treaty on the prevention of substances that deplete the ozone layer. It is designed to protect the ozone layer by phasing out emissions of substances known to be responsible for depleting the ozone layer.
- International Initiative for the Protection of the Ozone Layer: The 1985 Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer provided a framework for international cooperation on ozone protection.
- The Montreal Protocol which was adopted in the year 1987 is a worldwide agreement to stop the production of ozone-depleting substances. The Montreal Protocol has been signed by 197 parties of the world.

67th TAAI Convention held in Colombo

- The highly anticipated 67th Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) Convention commence begin on July 8 in Colombo. The three-day convention's inaugural ceremony promises to be a star-studded affair with the esteemed presence of Sri Lanka's President Ranil Wickremasinghe, and High Commissioner of India Gopal Baglay among others.
- The convention presents numerous trade opportunities for Indian and Sri Lankan travel industry stakeholders. With 500 participants and 50 Indian media personnel, the event solidifies its position as a premier travel event in the region. The convention's agenda features a range of thought-provoking sessions, including discussions on India's tourism vision for 2047, the rise of experiential travel, the growing significance of MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions), and the ever-expanding digital opportunities in the travel industry.
- As the convention unfolds, industry leaders and travel professionals from both India and Sri Lanka are expected to exchange knowledge, explore new partnerships, and foster mutual growth.
- The convention aims to strengthen ties between India and Sri Lanka, and serves as a platform to envision a prosperous future for tourism in the region. India has been the largest source market for tourism in Sri Lanka last year.

India-UK Electric Propulsion Technical Workshop held in New Delhi

- An India-UK Electric Propulsion Technical Workshop to foster collaboration, exchange knowledge, and explore the exciting possibilities in the field of electric propulsion was organized in New Delhi on 3 July 2023. The day-long workshop was co-chaired by Shri Rajeev Prakash, Joint Secretary (Naval Systems) from the Indian side, and Commodore John Voyce, Naval Base Commander Portsmouth from the UK side.
- The workshop served as a crucial platform for experts, researchers, and industry professionals from both countries to come together, share insights, and engage in meaningful discussions on the development of electric propulsion for ships.

- The interaction and discussions provided a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, paving the way for collaboration and the exchange of ideas.
- During the workshop, both sides expressed their commitment to forging strong defense ties and exploring avenues for joint research, technology transfer, and strategic partnerships.

Indian Navy and US Navy Conduct SALVEX Exercise in Kochi

- The Seventh edition of Indian Navy – US Navy (IN – USN) Salvage and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) exercise, SALVEX was conducted from 26 Jun – 06 Jul 23 at Kochi. IN and USN have been participating in joint Salvage and EOD exercises since 2005. The exercise saw participation from both the navies which included the ships – INS Nireekshak and USNS Salvor in addition to Specialist Diving and EOD teams.
- Spanning over 10 days, the Diving teams of both the countries shared experiences on Maritime Salvage and trained together in various facets of EOD Operations on land as well at sea. SALVEX also saw conduct of joint training exercises towards enhancing interoperability, cohesiveness and gaining from best practices mutually in Maritime Salvage and EOD operations.
- The constructive engagements on operational terms enhanced the skill-sets of the Diving teams in a number of diverse disciplines such as mine detection and neutralisation, wreck location and salvage.

India to set up first IIT campus abroad in Zanzibar, Tanzania

- An MoU has been signed to set up the IIT Madras campus in Tanzania. External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar is on a visit to Tanzania and witnessed the signing of this MoU.
- The External Affairs Minister tweeted that he witnessed the signing of the agreement on the establishment of the IIT Madras Zanzibar campus. He also appreciated the President Hussain Ali and his ministers for gracing the occasion. This historic step shows India's commitment to the Global South (developing countries).
- In addition, the External Affairs Minister and the President of Zanzibar attended the Deck Reception held onboard INS Trishul. He welcomed the presence of the Speaker of Parliament, ministers, parliamentarians, senior officers of the Tanzania Defence Forces, and the Indian diaspora to grace the occasion.
- Earlier, in the month of February, 2023, a delegation of the Indian Institute of Technology- Madras, had visited Tanzania to set up the first IIT offshore campus in the African continent. This kind of campus can be instrumental in the growth and the nation building of not only Tanzania but of the whole continent.

Indian Navy hosts 7th edition of bilateral Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2023 - (JIMEX 23)

- The seventh edition of the bilateral Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2023 (JIMEX 23) hosted by the Indian Navy, is being conducted at/ off Visakhapatnam from 05

-10 July 2023. This edition marks the 11th anniversary of JIMEX, since its inception in 2012.

- Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) units under the command of RAdm Nishiyama Takahiro, Commander Escort Flotilla One, and Indian Naval ships under the command of RAdm Gurcharan Singh, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet are participating in the exercise.
- JIMEX 23 will witness the participation of INS Delhi, India's first indigenously built Guided Missile Destroyer, INS Kamorta, an indigenously designed and built Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette, fleet tanker INS Shakti, a submarine, maritime patrol aircraft P8I and Dornier, ship-borne helicopters and fighter aircraft. JMSDF will be represented by the guided missile destroyer JS Samidare and its integral helicopters.
- The exercise will be conducted over six days in two phases - a Harbour Phase at Visakhapatnam comprising professional, sports and social interactions, after which, the two navies will jointly hone their warfighting skills at sea and enhance their interoperability through complex multi-discipline operations in the surface, sub-surface and air domains.

India, France navies conduct maritime partnership exercise in Bay of Bengal

- Indian Naval Ships INS Rana and INS Sumedha undertook a Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX) with French Navy ship FS Surcouf in the Bay of Bengal
- INS Rana is a guided missile destroyer and INS Sumedha is an indigenously built offshore patrol vessel that took part in the exercise.
- The French Navy's La Fayette class frigate Surcouf visited Visakhapatnam from June 26-29 and participated in a variety of activities with Indian Navy ships, which included professional and social interactions, sports fixtures and cross-deck visits, the Ministry of Defence said in an official release.
- Before leaving Visakhapatnam, the Indian naval vessels — Rana and Sumedha — participated in a number of exercises with the FS Surcouf, which included tactical manoeuvres, replenishment at sea (RAS) approaches, air defence against fighter aircraft and cross-deck helicopter operations.
- A customary farewell steam past between the ships reaffirmed the close friendship between the two fleets, marking the end of the MPX.

New Zealand becomes first country to ban thin plastic bags for fresh produce from supermarkets

- Beginning Saturday, New Zealand will become the first country to ban the thin plastic bags that supermarket customers use to collect their fruit and vegetables.
- The new ban will also extend to plastic straws and silverware, as the government expands a campaign against single-use plastics it started in 2019 when it banned the thicker plastic shopping bags that customers used to carry home their grocery items. These days, most customers bring their own reusable tote bags to stores.

- Officials estimate that on average, each New Zealander sends more than three-quarters of a ton of waste to landfills every year.
- "New Zealand produces too much waste, too much plastic waste," said Associate Environment Minister Rachel Brooking.
- Brooking said the 2019 bag ban had already prevented more than 1 billion plastic bags from being used in New Zealand, and the new ban on thin bags would add a further reduction of 150 million bags per year.

NATIONAL NEWS

Amazon India announces to open first floating store in Dal Lake

- As a part of last point delivery programme 'I Have Space', Amazon India has announced to open its first ever floating store in famous Dal Lake in Srinagar. The store should be open in a house boat and will provide deliveries to its customers every day in Srinagar.
- Murtaza Khan Kashi, owner of houseboat Selec Town, will deliver packages every day to customers at the doorstep of their houseboats as part of the onboarding.
- Amazon Logistics, India, Director Karuna Shankar Pande said this will provide faster and reliable deliveries to customers across Srinagar, opportunities for small businesses and strengthen Amazon's delivery network.
- Launched in 2015, the 'I Have Space' programme has 28,000 neighbourhood and kirana partners in about 420 towns and cities in India. It partners with local stores and small businesses for delivering products within a 2-4 kilometres radius.

Kerala to set up India's first fisheries Atal Incubation Centre

- NITI Aayog provided grant of Rs.10 crore to Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (FUFOS) to set up India's first Atal Incubation Centre (AIC) in fisheries which will be dedicated to promoting research, technological advancement and entrepreneurship in fisheries and allied sectors.
- Fisheries Atal Incubation centre will act as a focal point to foster innovation and inspire young individuals to create technologies and solutions that will address the challenges faced by our marine ecosystem and fishing communities.
- The primary objective behind setting up of Fisheries Atal Incubation Centre is to promote progress in the fisheries industry by providing a supportive and encouraging environment for start-ups and innovative initFisheries Atal Incubation Centre will play a significant role in employment generation, providing a supportive environment for start-ups and entrepreneurs to flourish.

India to home South Asia's first-ever Center for Species Survival

- With a vision to create a just world that values and conserves nature, IUCN Species Survival Commission has partnered with Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) to set up the first-ever Center for Species Survival in South Asia.
- In this regard, an MoU has been signed between Prof. Jon Paul Rodríguez, Chair—IUCN SSC and Vivek Menon, Executive Director, Wildlife Trust of India to

set up the first-ever regional Center for Species Survival (CSS) in India. This will be the 10th Centre for Species Survival in the world and the first of its kind in South Asia.

- The Center hopes to provide a platform for conservation practitioners to network and share best practices. It will also contribute to species status assessments using the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and amplify the impact of species recovery efforts across the country. The Centre will further act as a bridge between the national and international efforts to save species.

India's first online gaming academy set up in MP

- Madhya Pradesh is set to launch its first online gaming industry named "MP State Esports Academy" to provide the young esports player an opportunity and platform to advance to a professional level.
- The academy focuses on training aspiring gaming and esports professionals. An esports tournament will be held, selecting the top players for admission. 80% of the seats are reserved for gamers from Madhya Pradesh, while the remaining seats are open to gamers from all over the country. Anyone can participate in the tournament to compete for a spot at the academy.
- The state-wide MP Junior Esports Championship is scheduled to take place between July 27 and August 7, specifically focusing on esports enthusiasts aged between 12 and 17 years. The sports department will be responsible for organizing the 10-day tournament, providing a platform for young participants to engage and showcase their skills in the games.

Tech capital Bengaluru becomes 1st Indian city to join World Cities Culture Forum

- Bengaluru has joined the World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF), on Thursday, July 27, and becomes the first Indian city to achieve the feat. Founded by the office of the Mayor of London in 2021, WCCF is a global network of nearly 40 cities, which provides a way for policy makers in these cities to share research and intelligence, and explore the vital role of culture for their future prosperity.
- CCF has said that the Bengaluru city leaders will work alongside counterparts from other places, including Buenos Aires, London, New York and Tokyo for the city's growth and investment. WCCF will also work closely with Unboxing BLR Foundation, a not-for-profit initiative which aspires to make Bengaluru a vibrant, inclusive and global city. According to its website, Unboxing BLR is an initiative "to curate, facilitate and catalyze activities that will enable the citizens and communities of Bangalore to engage better with their city," and was founded in April 2022.

World Design Organisation inks MoU with BBMP to develop the infrastructure of Bengaluru

- As part of the 'Brand Bengaluru' initiative, spearheaded by Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who also holds charge of the city, on Monday the State government signed an agreement with Canada-based World Design Organization

(WDO) for suggestions for the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to build the city.

- Shivakumar said that 200 engineers from the WDO will be in the city to study and give suggestions on the city infrastructure including roads, flyovers, footpaths, junctions, and other infrastructure.
- Earlier, Mr. Shivakumar had launched a 'Brand Bengaluru' campaign and also an online portal to invite suggestions on the city's development by the public.

PM lays foundation stone and dedicates to nation various development projects in Sikar, Rajasthan

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone and dedicated to the nation various development projects in Sikar, Rajasthan today.
- The projects include dedicating to the nation more than 1.25 lakh PM Kisan Samridhi Kendras (PMKSKs), launching Urea Gold - a new variety of Urea coated with Sulphur, onboarding 1600 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) on Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), releasing 14th installment amount of about Rs 17,000 crores under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) to 8.5 crore beneficiaries, inaugurating 5 new medical colleges at Chittorgarh, Dholpur, Sirohi, Sikar.
- Sri Ganganagar, laying the foundation stone for 7 medical colleges at Baran, Bundi, Karauli, Jhunjhunu, Sawai Madhopur, Jaisalmer and Tonk, and inaugurating 6 Eklavya Model Residential Schools located in districts of Udaipur, Banswara, Partapgarh and Dungarpur and Kendriya Vidyalaya Tivri, Jodhpur.

PM Modi to inaugurate Gujarat's first Greenfield International Airport

- Prime minister Narendra Modi will dedicate the Hirasar Greenfield International Airport, Gujarat's first Greenfield Airport to the nation on Thursday during his two-day visit to Rajasthan and Gujarat from July 27-28
- Along with the airport, PM Modi will dedicate a number of key projects worth over ₹860 crore including packages 8 and 9 of the Saurashtra Narmada Avtaran Irrigation (SAUNI) Yojana.
- According to the press statement by the prime minister's office (PMO), the new airport, spanning across 2,500 acres, is envisioned to be a transportation hub for people traveling abroad from the state.
- Salient features of the Rajkot International Airport:
- The Hirasar Greenfield Airport, located at around 30 km from Rajkot, spans over 2500 acres and has been developed at a cost of ₹1,405 crore.
- The airport boasts a well-designed 3040 m (3.04 km) long and 45-meter-wide runway, capable of accommodating 14 planes simultaneously.

Amit Shah to launch cultural initiative 'Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar in New Delhi

- Union home minister and minister of cooperation Amit Shah will launch 'Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar' as part of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav on 27 July,

- It is a pan-India initiative of the Ministry of Culture under National Mission on Cultural Mapping. Shah will officially launch the virtual platform during a grand projection mapping show at the Qutub Minar. The virtual platform <https://mgmd.gov.in> will connect people with villages of India.

Ladakh's Kargil gets first women police station

- The first-ever women police station has started functioning here in the Union Territory of Ladakh, it a significant step towards empowering women and ensuring their safety.
- Additional Director General of Police, Ladakh, S D Singh Jamwal inaugurated the police station, which will specifically deal with crimes against women,
- The station will operate round the clock to ensure immediate assistance and support for women in need. Additionally, it will act as a resource centre, providing guidance and counselling services for women facing challenging situations,
- After inaugurating the police station, Jamwal emphasised the importance of women's empowerment and their active participation in the law enforcement.

International Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicate to the nation the International Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre (IECC) complex at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi today, July 26. The Prime Minister's vision of having a world class infrastructure for hosting meetings, conferences, and exhibitions in the country has led to the conceptualization of the International Exhibition-cum-Convention Centre.
- The project, which revamped the old and outdated facilities at Pragati Maidan, was developed as a national project at a cost of about 2,700 crore rupees. With a campus area of approximately 123 acres, the IECC complex has been developed as India's largest MICE – Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions – destination. The Complex finds its place among the top exhibition and convention complexes in the world, in terms of the covered space available for events.
- It comprises of multiple state-of-the-art facilities including a convention centre, exhibition halls, and amphitheatres.
- The Convention Centre is developed as the centerpiece of the Pragati Maidan complex. Its majestic multi-purpose hall and plenary hall have a combined capacity of seven thousand people, which is larger than the seating capacity of the famous Sydney Opera House in Australia. Its magnificent Amphitheater is equipped with a seating capacity of three thousand persons.

Rajasthan introduces India's first GIG workers bill 2023

- The Rajasthan assembly passed a bill extending social security to gig workers in the state, a first of its kind in the country, without any debate as the House

witnessed unruly scenes leading to expulsion of sacked minister Rajendra Gudha and BJP legislator Madan Dilawar for the remainder of the ongoing session.

- The Rajasthan Platform Based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023 seeks to register all gig workers and aggregators in the state, facilitate guarantee of social security to gig workers, and give them an opportunity to air any grievances.
- A vital component of the bill is setting up a welfare board, titled The Rajasthan Platform Based Gig Workers Welfare Board, which will have two members each from gig workers and aggregators to be nominated by the state government besides two civil servants. The board will ensure registration of gig workers and aggregators operating in the state and establish a social security and welfare fund for gig workers. The bill states that the state government will maintain a database of the gig workers and generate a unique ID for every one of them.

Bombay HC directs Goa govt to notify Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary as tiger reserve

- The Bombay high court at Goa on Monday directed the state government to notify the Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary and other areas as a tiger reserve under Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 within three months and pulled up the government for continuing “to steadfastly avoid notifying the tiger reserve”.
- In its ruling on a petition seeking directions to the state government to notify the sanctuary as a tiger reserve, the high court said that “we cannot allow the tiger, which is a national animal, to fall into a death trap” and ruled that the National Tiger Conservation Authority’s repeated recommendations to set up a tiger reserve were not merely recommendations but also directives that would need to be mandatorily complied with.

Arvind Kejriwal inaugurates Delhi’s first RO water ATM

- Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal unveiled Delhi’s first ‘water ATM’ aiming to offer water access in regions without piped supply and reducing reliance on water tankers. These water ATM machines will grant underprivileged sections of the city the same quality of RO(Reverse Osmosis) water that has traditionally been available to more affluent segments of society.
- The Delhi government aims to address the issue of inadequate piped water supply by installing 500 Reverse Osmosis (RO) plants with integrated “water ATM machines” in affected areas. This initiative, led by the Delhi Jal Board, seeks to provide free and safe access to clean drinking water for residents in such regions.
- The placement of these 500 RO plants, each with a capacity of 30,000 liters, will be determined based on the availability of tubewells. The plants will be operated by appointed personnel on government-provided land, while the cost of ₹10 lakh per plant will be covered by the Delhi Jal Board.

Shri Amit Shah lays the foundation stone of 108 feet tall statue of Lord Shri Ram in Kurnool

- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah lays the foundation stone of 108 feet tall statue of Lord Shri Ram in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh through video conferencing. the grand statue of Lord Shri Ram to be built at a cost of more than Rs 500 crore.
- This project is spread over an area of 10 acres in Mantralayam village situated on the banks of Tungabhadra river and would be completed in two and a half years.
- Mantralayam village is very famous for the temple of Raghavendra Swamy. This place has historical significance. The great Vijayanagara Empire was originated on the banks of the Tungabhadra river, it restored Swadesh and Swadharma by driving out the invaders from the entire South.
- He said that this 108 feet tall statue of Lord Shri Ram to be installed in Mantralayam will give the message of our Sanatan Dharma to the entire world for many ages and will strengthen the Vaishnava tradition in the country and the world. Shri Shah said that 108 is a very sacred number in our Hindu culture.

Jammu to pioneer India's first Cannabis Medicine Project

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today said, Jammu is going to pioneer India's first Cannabis Medicine Project.
- 'Cannabis Research Project' of CSIR-IIIM Jammu is a first of its kind in India initiated under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in Private Public Partnership with a Canadian firm, which has a great potential to put substance of abuse for the good of mankind especially for patients suffering from neuropathies, cancer and epilepsy.
- CSIR-IIIM - Council Of Scientific And Industrial Research–Indian Institute Of Integrative Medicine (CSIR–IIIM), The Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine is a premier institute located in Jammu under the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, Government of India and dedicated to the research of drug discovery

Lavasa, India's first private hill station, sold to Darwin Platform Infrastructure

- India's first private hill station Lavasa was sold to Darwin Platform Infrastructure for Rs 1.8 thousand crore after the approval of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).
- The resolution plan of Darwin Platform Infrastructure has been accepted by the NCLT and includes payment of Rs 1,814 crore. This payment includes Rs 929 crore to be paid to lenders and Rs 438 crore allocated to provide fully constructed houses to 837 approved home owners.
- The primary objective of Darwin Platform Infrastructure's resolution plan is to address claims of home buyers and ensure delivery of completed homes within five years, subject to obtaining environment clearance, with a total claim amount of Rs 6,642 crore.

- The resolution plan for Lavasa aims to reduce the concerns and uncertainties that have arisen among various stakeholders associated with the Lavasa project.
- As per the approved resolution plan, home buyers will be required to bear the actual future construction cost payable to Darwin Platform Infrastructure, while ensuring transparency and accountability in the process of receiving fully constructed properties.

Odisha cabinet approves Mission Shakti Scooter Yojana

- Odisha's Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik approved the Mission Shakti Scooter Yojana, a scheme aimed at providing interest subvention on bank loans up to INR 1,00,000 to beneficiaries, enabling them to purchase a scooter.
- This initiative grants affordable access to two-wheelers for Mission Shakti Federation Leaders and CSS (Community Support Staff). It will empower them to fulfill their responsibilities more efficiently, thus increasing their effectiveness and extending their outreach within the community.
- This scheme is expected to benefit roughly 75,000 community support staff members of SHGs (Self Help Groups) and approximately 1,25,000 federation leaders associated with SHGs.

Mega plantation drive starts in Uttar Pradesh

- The mega plantation drive in Uttar Pradesh started today with a target of the plantation of overall 35 crore saplings out of which 30 crore saplings will be planted today. Another part of the drive will be on Independence Day when five crore saplings will be planted by the 15th of August. The State has set a target of plantation of 35 crore saplings this year.
- Aakashwani correspondent reports that, the theme of this year's plantation drive is 'Ped Lagao Ped Bachao' which means 'plant trees, save trees'. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath started the campaign by planting saplings in Vidur Kuti Ashram in Bijnaur. In his tweet message Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath appealed to every citizen of the State to take part in this campaign and plant at least one sapling around their place.
- Governor Anandiben Patel is in Mathura to take part in this drive and other Ministers are also taking part in this mega plantation drive at different districts. Another five crore saplings will be planted on the 15th of August. Different Ministries have been given targets for this plantation drive and the whole State machinery will work in tandem to achieve the goal of plantation of 30 crore saplings. Last year, the State achieved a record of planting 35 crore saplings and this year the same target has been fixed.

DPIIT and Govt of Gujarat jointly launch 'One District One Product' Wall at Garvi Gujarat Bhawan

- One District One Product (ODOP) program, an initiative under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce & Industry, launched its first collaboration with the Government of Gujarat in New

Delhi to promote the indigenous crafts and artisans of the State. Smt. Manmeet Nanda, Joint Secretary, DPIIT, and Smt. Arti Kanwar, Resident Commissioner and Secretary (Economic Affairs) Finance Department, Government of Gujarat jointly inaugurated the ODOP Wall at Garvi Gujarat Bhawan.

- Gujarat, with its 33 districts, exemplifies the vast geographic coverage and potential for diverse products across the state. ODOP-Gujarat features a rich collection of 68 unique products, ranging from traditional crafts like Gamthi Block print and Mata-ni-Pachedi to agricultural goods such as groundnuts and cumin
- In a significant collaboration, ODOP has partnered with the Government of Gujarat to implement product tagging and story cards, enhancing the promotion and recognition of Gujarat's unique products. This collaboration aims to drive consumers towards emporia, boosting sales and increasing the visibility of Gujarat's products at the national level. Garvi Gujarat Bhawan has integrated ODOP products into its interiors to better showcase Gujarat handicrafts.

Kerala gets India's first Construction Innovation Hub

- Kerala got the country's first Construction Innovation Hub (CIH) that seeks to promote affordable and sustainable building facilities so as to foster collaboration, innovation and knowledge-sharing among the stakeholders.
- Kerala Startup Mission (KSUM) will be responsible for the CIH's overall programme management, including the identification and recruitment of the nascent companies as well as providing them housing-related technical mentorship and connections, besides program design and facilitation.
- Set up in association with Habitat for Humanity India (HFHI), which is an American non-profit organisation building homes and providing housing-related services to low-income families, the CIH is set to be based in Kochi.

Himachal Chief Minister Launches Collateral-Free Loan Scheme For Women

- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, launched a collateral-free loan scheme for women. The 'Sashakt Mahila Rin Yojna' is an initiative of Himachal Pradesh State Cooperative Bank (HPSCB), which will provide loans to women for pursuing their entrepreneurial dreams, engage in livelihood activities, fulfil their day to day needs and uplift their families, a statement issued.
- Sukhu said that the scheme aims to empower women as the applicants need not to provide any assets or collateral as security against the loan amount.
- "The absence of collateral removes a significant barrier for women, especially those who may not have valuable assets to offer as security for taking loans," he added.
- By providing financial assistance to women for self-employment and livelihood activities, the scheme will contribute to the economic empowerment of women, make them financially independent and improve their socio-economic status, the chief minister said.

- Under the scheme, the bank offers credit of Rs 21,000, Rs 51,000 and Rs 1,01,000 at a relatively low-interest rate of 8.51 per cent.

Gujarat to get country's 1st 'Satellite Network Portal Site'

- The Gujarat government signed an MoU with London-based Company, OneWeb and the Department of Science and Technology to set up a 'Satellite Network Portal Site.'
- The MoU was signed by Vijay Nehra, Secretary, the State Department of Science and Technology, and Rahul Vatts, Director of OneWeb India Communication Pvt. Ltd.
- As per reports, OneWeb has decided to set up two 'Satellite Network Portal Sites' and one of them will be in Mehsana district of Gujarat and the other one will be in Tamil Nadu.
- The site will provide high-speed, low-latency, and affordable connectivity to the government, businesses, consumers, schools, among others. It will provide continuous and secure satellite internet access at affordable rates in the country.
- This satellite network portal, to be set up at Katosan and Tejpura in Jotana, will be commissioned in 2023 with a possible investment of over Rs 100 crores in Phase-I. It will create approximately 500 direct and indirect employment opportunities in the state.
- OneWeb is a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite company, which has as many as 648 satellites and aims to build a global communication network. It uses LEO to provide a broadband network instead of using the traditional method of using geostationary satellites located 36,000 km above the equator.

Chhattisgarh Government has launched Gramin Awaas Nyay Yojna

- A new housing scheme named Gramin Awaas Nyay Yojna launched by the Chhattisgarh Government, CM Bhupesh Baghel, with an objective to provide the free housing facility to the poor in the state. Gramin Awaas Nyay Yojna will cover up those families who are not eligible for PM Awaas Yojna based on 2011 SECC, based on the new survey conducted by the Department of Panchayat and Rural Development.
- Gramin Awaas Nyay Yojna is a new housing scheme of Chhattisgarh launched on 19th July with an objective to provide pucca house to those poor families who are ineligible for PM Awaas Yojna 2011 SECC.

Anshuman Jhingran Becomes Youngest Person To Cross North Channel

- Anshuman Jhingran, a 18-year-old open water swimmer from Navi Mumbai, has achieved a remarkable milestone by becoming the youngest person ever to cross the North Channel.
- His extraordinary accomplishment, completed in just 125 days, has earned him a coveted spot in the esteemed Guinness World Records.

- Notably, his successful crossing marks the 114th achievement of its kind since 1947. Anshuman's outstanding feat has brought him well-deserved global recognition and admiration from the international swimming community.
- About: The North Channel - The North Channel, situated between the northeastern coast of Northern Ireland and the southwestern coast of Scotland, serves as a strait that starts north of the Isle of Man, marking the end of the Irish Sea. Flowing northwestward into the Atlantic Ocean, this channel is renowned as one of the most challenging Ocean Seven Swims.

Regional Office of Universal Postal Union (UPU) gets inaugurated in New Delhi

- Minister of State for Communication Shri Devusinh Chauhan and Director General, Universal Postal Union (DG UPU) Mr Masahiko Metoki inaugurated the Regional Office of UPU here today. The Regional Office will undertake UPU's technical assistance activities in South Asia region by entering into a host country agreement by Department of Posts, India.
- The Regional Office of UPU in India will serve as a vital platform for exchanging ideas, experiences and expertise, thereby accelerating the modernisation and transformation of the postal sector. It will act as a hub for promoting collaboration among UPU member countries in the Asia Pacific region, encouraging innovation and facilitating knowledge sharing to enhance postal services.
- India also announced contribution of USD 2,00,000 over a period of four years towards the UPU's Development and Technical Assistance activities through Asia Pacific Postal Union. This financial contribution aims to support capacity building, infrastructure development, and other essential activities to strengthen the postal sector in the region.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates new integrated terminal building of Port Blair airport

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the new integrated terminal building or NITB of the Veer Savarkar International Airport at Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar Islands
- Civil aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, Union minister of state for road, transport and highways and civil aviation, general (retd) VK Singh and senior officials attended the ceremony.
- The terminal building is shaped like a shell, depicting the natural environs of the islands. The entire terminal will have 100 per cent natural lighting for 12 hours a day which will be achieved through skylights on the roof.
- Due to a surge in passenger traffic, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) constructed the NITB at an estimated cost of ₹707.73 crore.
- With a total built-up area of 40,837 sq metres, the new terminal building will have the capacity to handle 1,200 passengers during peak hours and around 40 lakh passengers annually.
- The three-storey building will be equipped with 28 check-in counters, three passenger boarding bridges and four conveyor belts.

Nokia and TSSC launch 5G skill development centre in Gujarat

- Finnish telecom gear maker Nokia and India's Telecom Sector Skill Council (TSSC) will train 300 people in 5G, IoT and allied skills at the Nokia Centre of Excellence which was inaugurated at ITI Kubernagar, Gujarat,
- The primary objective is to offer job placements to at least 70 percent of learners within 4-6 weeks after completing the course. In the first year of the project, approximately 300 candidates will benefit from this program. Balvantsinh Rajput, the Cabinet Minister for Labour and Employment in the state, presided over the inauguration ceremony of the 5G skill development center.
- Nokia is leading the way in pioneering advancements in telecom technology and is committed to cultivating a highly skilled workforce to contribute to the development of the 5G ecosystem. As part of its India corporate social responsibility (CSR) program, Nokia is making substantial investments in infrastructure, equipment, and training for the five labs within the Center of Excellence (CoE). Additionally, Nokia aims to foster connectivity and digitization, leveraging these efforts to generate positive socioeconomic, educational, and health benefits in India.

Delhi's IGI becomes India's first airport to have four runways

- Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) on Friday became India's first airport to have four runways as the civil aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurated its fourth runway and hinted at the opening of the airport's new terminal by October this year.
- Pointing that the new runway along with the new terminal will allow Delhi airport to cater to 109 Million passengers yearly, Scindia said that the country's civil aviation sector is witnessing the beginning of the growth phase and that the civil aviation sector is contributing to the rise of the economic power of India.
- This runway along with the terminal expansion will add to creating capacity to serve more than 109 million people throughput which would crest and beat even Atlanta in its capability,
- Scindia also inaugurated India's first eastern cross taxiway (ECT) that will connect the Northern part of the airfield to the southern side, thus reducing taxi time for aircraft and help passengers deplane within 12 minutes of landing.

Indian Army signs contract for procurement of Tactical Access Switch with Tata Advanced Systems Limited

- Continuing with the commitment towards 'Make in India' initiative the Indian Army has signed the second procurement contract through Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) on 09 June 2023. The contract with M/s Astrome Tech Pvt Ltd, Bangalore for procurement of indigenously developed 'Tactical LAN Radio' was signed in presence of Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, the Vice Chief of

Army Staff at New Delhi. With this initiative, the Indian Army has taken a lead by signing two contracts under IDEX till date.

- Tactical LAN solution is being developed indigenously for creating secure tactical LAN in remote and difficult terrain. 'Tactical LAN Radio' is a state of the art high bandwidth backhaul wireless radio equipment for provisioning of reliable and failsafe communication. The solution offers an enhanced range of communication and embedded frequency hopping mechanism to preclude chances of interception and long-range point-to-multipoint high-bandwidth communication. The system also incorporates the enhanced safety features and can operate continuously for 48 hours on a single set basis without any breakdown.

OPPO India sets up first PPP-model Atal Tinkering Lab in Kerala

- OPPO India in collaboration with NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) as its knowledge partner has announced the establishment of an Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL) in Kerala. This collaboration marks the establishment of the first-ever Atal Tinkering Lab, based on the PPP (Public-Private Partnership) model.
- The lab at St Paul's CEHSS in Kuriachira, Thrissur, was inaugurated on July 10, 2023 by Rajeev Chandrashekar, the Minister of State for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Electronics and Information Technology. The primary objective of this initiative is to create an empowered future-ready workforce and nurture entrepreneurship and technological skills among the youth
- Till 2022, 10,000 ATLs were established across 35 States and UTs in India through government grants. "The establishment of the first PPP Atal Tinkering Lab in collaboration with OPPO India is a significant milestone in India's School Innovation journey.

Minister Vaishnaw inaugurates Indian Mobile Congress IMC in Delhi

- The Curtain Raiser of IMC-2023, the seventh edition of India Mobile Congress, was inaugurated by Minister for Communications, Electronics & Information Technology and Railways, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, in the presence of Minister of State for Communications, Shri Devusinh Chauhan.
- The event was attended by members of Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI), representatives from telecom industries, and start-ups. IMC-2023, co-hosted by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and COAI, will take place from October 27th to 29th at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi. With the theme of 'Global Digital Innovation,' the event is expected to attract over 100,000 participants, 5,000 CXO-level delegates, 350 speakers, and 400 exhibitors. The ministers emphasized the importance of IMC in showcasing India's technological advancements and the transformative potential of 5G. The event aims to involve various industries, introduce partner countries, and promote India as a technology developer and exporter.

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurates 'SAGAR SAMPARK' Differential Global Navigation Satellite System to Strengthen Maritime sector

- The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways is committed towards innovation, building best infrastructure, and strengthening the Indian Maritime sector. Today, to further the digital initiative in maritime sector
- The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the indigenous Differential Global Navigation Satellite System (DGNSS) 'SAGAR SAMPARK' in the presence of Shri Shripad Y. Naik, the Minister of State of Ports, Shipping and Waterways; Shri TK Ramachandran, IAS Secretary, MoPSW and other senior officials from the ministry and Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships. DGNSS is a terrestrial based enhancement system which corrects the errors and inaccuracies in the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) allowing for more accurate positioning information.
- The DGNSS service will help mariners in safe navigation and will reduce the risk of collisions, groundings, and accidents in the port and harbour areas. This will lead to safe & efficient movement of vessels.

Numaligarh Refinery in Assam upgraded to 'Schedule A' category enterprise

- Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) has established itself as one of the top 20 CPSEs in India in terms of both sales revenue and profitability. It has gained widespread recognition as a high-performing refinery in the country, setting industry benchmarks for distillate production, specific energy usage, and gross refining profit. Furthermore, NRL has embarked on exporting petroleum products to neighboring countries, solidifying its global presence and playing a vital role in advancing the Act East Policy of the Government of India.
- With a refining capacity of 3 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA), NRL holds the distinction of being the largest refinery in Northeast India. Currently, it is undertaking a significant expansion project to triple its refining capacity to 9 MMTPA, alongside the construction of a transnational crude oil pipeline from Paradip in Odisha. NRL is also actively involved in projects valued at Rs. 35,000 crores in the region, representing one of the largest investments in the oil and gas sector.

ONGC Becomes India's First PSU to Achieve Anti-Bribery Management System Certification

- Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has recently made history by becoming the first Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) in India to receive certification for its Anti-Bribery Management System (ABMS). The certification was awarded by the internationally accredited certification body InterCert USA. ONGC's commitment to combat bribery was previously demonstrated in 2005 when it became the first organization in India to adopt the Integrity Pact (IP) initiated by Transparency International.
- A Landmark Achievement: ONGC's pursuit of an ABMS certification marks a significant milestone in its journey as an Energy Maharatna, further solidifying its position as a trusted business partner. The certification was achieved by

successfully implementing the ISO 37001:2016 International Standard, following a thorough assessment and validation process conducted by InterCert USA

Rajnath Singh inaugurates HAL's regional office in Kuala Lumpur

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)'s Regional Office in Kuala Lumpur to facilitate close defence industrial collaboration between India and Malaysia, the Ministry of Defence said in a press release.
- He also interacted with the Indian diaspora and urged them to work incessantly for shared prosperity between India and Malaysia.
- Recognising defence exports as a key pillar of sustainable growth of the Indian defence industry, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the Regional Office of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- This Regional Office will facilitate close defence industrial collaboration between India and Malaysia. It will also serve as a hub for the HAL's engagement with the wider South-East Asian region and act as a window for other Indian Defense PSUs, the press release.
- Malaysia is home to the second largest members of the Persons of Indian Origin and has a significant presence of the NRI community. The Defence Minister interacted with the Indian diaspora on two different occasions.

Dell joins Intel to launch AI skills lab in India

- Dell Technologies and Intel have joined forces to establish an artificial intelligence (AI) lab in Telangana institute. The partnership aims to bridge the digital skills gap and empower students at Lords Institute of Engineering & Technology in Telangana by integrating Intel's 'AI for Youth' program into their curriculum. This initiative seeks to prepare students for the industry with the necessary expertise for the future job market and foster an AI-ready ecosystem on campus.
- Dell and Intel's collaboration focuses on demystifying AI for the next generation by incorporating Intel's 'AI for Youth' program into the existing curriculum. The initiative aims to equip students with the necessary digital skills, reducing the gap between industry demands and the skills possessed by graduates.
- The partnership includes training provided by Intel to selected teachers, enabling them to effectively educate students on AI concepts. Students will benefit from over 170 hours of AI curriculum, which includes bootcamps, AI-Thons, virtual showcases, and other activities designed to enhance their AI skills.
- A key aspect of the collaboration is the establishment of an AI Skills lab on the campus, where students can gain hands-on experience and develop AI-driven solutions. The lab will foster innovation in emerging AI technologies, including natural language processing (NLP), computer vision, and statistical data analytics.

India's first Vedic-themed park opened in Noida

- India's first Vedic-themed park is inaugurated in Noida's Sector 78, The park, named Ved Van Park, is a unique blend of spirituality, culture, and nature, that offers an immersive experience into the world of the four Vedas: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, and Atharva Veda.
- The theme park was constructed with a budget of Rs 27 crore, not Rs 28 crore as previously mentioned.
- The park is divided into seven zones, each named after revered sages of the Vedic age such as Vishvamitra, Vasishtha, and Agastya, among others. Each zone offers a unique exploration of the themes and teachings of the Vedas.
- There are over 50,000 plants, all meticulously chosen from Vedic literature, creating a lush and vibrant environment for visitors. These include kalpa vriksha, neem, and banyan, among others, all of which have been mentioned in Vedic literature. For those seeking physical activity, an open gym has also been set up. Additionally, a solar-lit amphitheatre provides a space for cultural performances and gatherings.
- In the evenings, visitors can enjoy a captivating Vedic-themed laser show that narrates stories from the Vedas. Other attractions also include a Rishi zone and a water laser zone for people to soak into the Vedic culture.

3rd Trade and Investment Working Group Meeting begins in Kevadia, Gujarat

- As part of India's G20 presidency, the third Trade and Investment Working Group Meeting began in Kevadia today. More than 75 international delegates from various G20 countries are taking part in the three-day meeting at Kevadiya. The delegates are participating in a seminar on 'Trade Infrastructure'. Later in the day, the international representatives will visit the famous Statue of Unity.
- The focus of the meeting is to build consensus among G 20 countries on adopting proposals put forward by the Indian Presidency on global trade and investment-related issues.
- The meet will formally be inaugurated tomorrow. There will be a series of technical sessions tomorrow and day after tomorrow during which G 20 members will give their comments on Indian presidency proposal.

These tools of IIT-Kharagpur can check loco pilot's alertness before and during duty

- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kharagpur, has come up with a tool that will check the alertness of locomotive pilots, both before and while they are at the wheel.
- The tool is a tamper-proof device that will measure the drowsiness of the loco pilot in real-time and create alertness based on the analysis of normal and near-infrared facial images.
- The device will use the camera to capture images of the loco pilot's face to compute a metric of drowsiness by observing the dynamics of eyelid motion.
- "In the event of loss of attention, it will sound an alarm and can also send an alert to the control room. The algorithm residing on the processor computes the

percentage of eye closure over time, and based on a predetermined threshold, the driver is declared as drowsy,” said IIT-Kharagpur electrical engineering professor Aurobinda Routray.

Ministry of Education releases report on Performance Grading Index 2.0 for States/UTs for the year 2021-22.

- The Indian Education System is one of the largest in the world with about 14.9 lakh schools, 95 lakh teachers, and nearly 26.5 crore students from varied socio-economic backgrounds. Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education, devised Performance Grading Index (PGI) for States and UTs which assesses the performance of school education system at the State/UT level by creating an index for comprehensive analysis. The PGI - States/UTs was first released for the year 2017-18 and so far, has been released up to the year 2020-21.
- Over the period, many of the indicators in PGI – States/UTs have been outlived and become redundant. Also, the structure of PGI – States/UTs has been heavily tilted towards the indicators related to Governance Processes rather than the quality indicators. Therefore, to have more updated base with quality indicators, to align with new initiatives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, to monitor indicators relating to Goal 4 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to replace existing indicators which have achieved optimal target, the PGI – State structure for 2021-22 has been revised and renamed as PGI 2.0. In PGI 2.0, the data source for many of the indicators has been the data from UDISE+ and the grades have been aligned with the PGI - District to have uniformity and better comparability,
- The new PGI structure covers 73 indicators, focused more on qualitative assessment besides including digital initiatives and teacher education. The grades/level obtained by States/UTs in previous edition of the PGIs are thus not comparable as with the grades/levels obtained by States/UTs in this new edition.
- The PGI 2.0 structure comprises of 1000 points across 73 indicators grouped into 2 categories viz., Outcomes, Governance Management (GM). These categories are further divided into 6 domains, viz., Learning Outcomes (LO), Access (A), Infrastructure & Facilities (IF), Equity (E), Governance Process (GP) & Teachers Education and Training (TE&T).

IAU Names Minor Planet After India's First Professional Meteor Scientist Aswin Sekhar

- The International Astronomical Union (IAU) honoured Indian astrophysicist Aswin Sekhar by naming a minor planet after him. The honour was conferred on him at the 2023 edition of the Asteroids Comets Meteors Conference, which took place in Arizona on June 21, 2023.
- It is worth noting that only five Indians -- Nobel laureates CV Raman and Subramanya Chandrasekhar; mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan; prominent physicist and astronomer Vikram Sarabhai; astronomer and former president of

IAU Manali Kallat Vainu Bappu, who was also the co-discoverer of the Wilson-Bappu Effect, were conferred this honour before him.

- Sekhar works as an astrophysicist at the Institute of Celestial Mechanics, Paris Observatory in France. He is the first professional meteor scientist from India. While speaking to the media, Sekhar said that he was deeply humbled and honoured by this recognition. "This was announced at this Asteroids, comets-meteors conference in Arizona in America, and it was surprising. It was a pleasant surprise,

Odisha CM Launches 'Ama Pokhari' Scheme To Revive Ponds In Cities

- Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today launched the 'Aam Pokhari' scheme to revive ponds lying unused in the urban areas of the state.
- Under the Ama Pokhari scheme, 2,000 large water bodies in 115 urban areas will be rejuvenated and its periphery will be renovated for healthy space for the public. This will be done in partnership with Mission Shakti WSHG and educated young men & women who have passed out of college. A better environment will be created at a lower cost in natural ways.
- he Chief Minister said that ponds play an important role in our social and cultural life. It is also related to health and the economy. He expressed the hope that the revived ponds will become an integral part of urban life.

Defence ministry, HAL sign ₹458 cr contract for two upgraded Dornier aircraft for coast guard

- The Ministry of Defence on Friday signed a contract with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the procurement of two Dornier aircraft for the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) along with an associated engineering support package at an overall cost of ₹458.87 crore.
- The aircraft will be procured under the 'Buy (Indian) Category', the ministry said in a statement. It added that the aircraft will be fitted with several advanced equipment including a glass cockpit, maritime patrol radar, electro-optic infrared device, and mission management system.
- "The addition will further bolster the aerial surveillance capability of maritime areas of responsibilities of the ICG," the ministry said.
- "The Dornier aircraft are being indigenously manufactured at HAL (Transport Aircraft Division), Kanpur and will significantly contribute in achieving Aatmanirbharta in defence, in consonance with the 'Make in India' initiative of the government," it added.
- Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh launches a single window NCC Integrated Software for Cadets
- In a major step towards promoting digitisation and in sync with Digital India mission, Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh launched an NCC Integrated Software in New Delhi on 07 July 2023. The NCC Integrated Software, developed in partnership with Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo

Informatics (BISAG), is a single window interactive software for Cadets, designed on the 'Entry to Exit Model'.

- The NCC Integrated Software is based on the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Once a Cadet always a cadet", and will digitalize the entire process from the stage of enrolment.
- as a cadet in NCC till exit registration as alumni. This will enable seamless issue of certificates, creation of an all India database of NCC cadets at the time of their employment.
- During this event, the NCC and State Bank of India (SBI) also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the presence of Raksha Mantri to open zero balance accounts of all NCC Cadets with debit card, chequebook & passbook facility under SBI's "Pahli Udaan" scheme. About 5 lakh cadets will be benefitted by this MoU every year.
- The account will remain functional till completion of training or attaining 18 years of age whichever is later. This will not only introduce the cadets to the national banking system but also provide them with a ready platform to avail benefit of other govt schemes through DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) of funds into their accounts.

Shravani Mela inaugurated in Deogha Jharkhand

- · Shravani Mela, one of the largest religious congregations in the country's eastern region, was inaugurated in Jharkhand's Deoghar district on Monday. State Agriculture Minister Badal Patralekha inaugurated the fair at Kanwariyapath in Dumma, bordering Bihar. Usually, the mela is organised for a month during the month of 'Shravan', according to the Saka Calendar. This year, the fair will be organised for two consecutive months from July 3 to August 31.
- · Devotees from various parts of the country and abroad visit Deoghar during the month of 'Shravan' and offer prayers at Baba Baidyanath Dham temple. The journey ends with the pilgrims pouring the holy water on the 'shivalingam' at the Baba Baidyanath Dham temple. This year, the number of devotees may double compared to previous years. The government as well as the Deoghar administration has made proper arrangements for the pilgrims,
- · To accommodate the vast number of attendees, the Deoghar administration has made significant arrangements. Facilities such as drinking water, toilets, electricity, and cleanliness have been prioritized to ensure the well-being of the pilgrims. In addition, the establishment of 27 police outposts enhances crowd management and maintains a secure environment within the fair premises.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated development projects worth over 6000 crore rupees in Warangal, Telangana

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of several infrastructure projects in Warangal, Telangana this morning July 8. He will arrive at Hakimpet Airport Station by a special flight from Varanasi to reach Warangal. After visiting famous Bhadrakali Temple, the Prime Minister will lay the

foundation stone of infrastructure works worth over 6000 crore rupees in a virtual mode. He will also address a public meeting from the Arts College Grounds, Hanmakonda.

- Prime Minister also laid the stone for the hundred and eight -km long Mancherial-Warangal section of the Nagpur-Vijayawada Corridor, which will reduce the distance by about 34 km on two national highways. He will also lay the stone for the upgradation of the 68-km long Karimnagar-Warangal section from the existing two-lane to four-lanes. This will help in improving connectivity to Hyderabad-Warangal Industrial Corridor, Kakatiya Mega Textile Park, and the special economic zone at Warangal. The Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone to the Railway Manufacturing Unit at Kazipet, which will improve the manufacturing
- capacity and also job opportunities to the local youth. The Prime Minister's visit assumes significance as Telangana state is going for Assembly polls in the next few months.

Amit Shah lays foundation stone of first co-operative-run Sainik School in Gujarat

- Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah organized a virtual ceremony to lay the foundation stone of the country's first cooperative-run Sainik School. This event took place near Mehsana in Gujarat. Sainik Schools are being established in honor of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal to start 100 new Sainik Schools on PPP basis across India. This Sainik School, run by a cooperative, is a symbol of the government's commitment to include various sectors in the development of the country.
- The Sainik School will be set up in Boriyavi village, located about 11 km from Mehsana city in Gujarat. Leading cooperative organisation Dudhsagar Dairy is starting this project at a cost of Rs 75 crore. The virtual foundation stone laying ceremony was attended by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and several senior cabinet ministers.

Gujarat govt doubles insurance cover under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya scheme

- In Gujarat, the state government has doubled the insurance cover under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana from the 11th of July. Now, the beneficiaries of PMAY will get an insurance cover of Rs 10 lakhs instead of the earlier 5 lakhs.
- Talking to the media, the State Health Minister Rushikesh Patel said the decision will benefit nearly 1.78 crore Ayushman Bharat card holders in the state. He added that the beneficiaries will get a free of cost medical treatment over two thousand government hospitals and 795 private hospitals in the state under PMAY
- AIR correspondent reports more than 39 lakh claims have been received in Gujarat under PMAY. The state ranks fifth in the country in terms of number of claims and has secured second position in terms of amount of claims cleared under PMAY so far. The claims worth over 2800 crore have been cleared in the state so far.

Indore Municipal Corporation to be the first urban body to get EPR credit

- Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) in Madhya Pradesh, India, has made history by becoming the first urban body in the country to receive Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) credit for recycling banned single-use plastic items. I
- Indore has implemented a complete ban on single-use plastic items within the city. In recent times, the IMC seized approximately eight tonnes of such plastic, preventing its circulation. Moreover, Indore has also been recognized as India's cleanest city for the sixth consecutive year in the central government's annual cleanliness survey.
- EPR is an environmental policy approach in which a producer's responsibility for a product is extended to the post-consumer stage of a product's life cycle.
- Indore faces the daily challenge of managing a substantial amount of solid waste, with an average of 1,162 tonnes generated each day. This includes approximately 164 tonnes of plastic waste. However, the IMC has implemented an efficient waste collection system, where waste is categorized and collected from every doorstep in the city using civic vehicles. The collected waste is then promptly disposed of at the recycling plant, ensuring the city remains clean and environmentally sustainable.

Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated International Hostel - Madhumaas at IARI

- Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated an International Hostel named "Madhumaas" at ICAR-IARI.
- The inauguration ceremony was held on 3rd July on Guru Purnima and was attended by Union Minister of State Kailash Choudhary and Dr. Himanshu Pathak, Director General and Secretary, DARE.
- The government is supporting the creation of student-centric hostels with high-quality facilities and international standards due to the Institute's international education and growing student enrollment.
- About: Madhumaas" International Hostel - It can accommodate 504 students and offers facilities like single bedded rooms, rooms with attached bathroom and kitchen and family apartments.
- The hostel complex has a food court, gymnasium, restaurant, solar power system, rain water harvesting system, generator-based power backup, Wi-Fi network and R.O facilities.

Raksha Rajya Mantri inaugurates CSD Depot in Ambala

- Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Ajay Bhatt inaugurated new premises of the Canteen Store Department (CSD) Depot at Ambala on July 05, 2023. The premises has been constructed by Dedicated Freight Corridor India Limited under the Railway Ministry, in exchange of the land of the old CSD depot.
- Speaking on the occasion, RRM appreciated the work being done by CSD in realizing PM's vision of automation and ease of doing business by providing excellent service to the armed forces, veterans, and their families. He

congratulated the department for completing 75 years of service to the armed forces and their families.

- Established in 1948, CSD has 34 regional depots spread all over the country. "The contribution of the department in ensuring uninterrupted supply of essential commodities to the beneficiaries during the pandemic has been exemplary and commendable," he said.
- He also praised the Indian Railways for undertaking projects to boost the economy of the country.

PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates Sai Hira Global Convention Centre In Andhra Pradesh

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday virtually inaugurated the Sai Hira Global Convention Centre in Andhra Pradesh's Puttaparthi.
- Speaking at the event, the PM said that it will be a centre of spiritual conferences and academic programs and that experts from all across the world will come here. He expressed hope that the centre will help the youth of the country. He said that the country is getting a major think tank in the form of Shri Hira Global Convention Center:
- PM Modi said that any idea is effective only when it is followed by action. He added that today, India is moving on the path of duty and taking the development and legacy forward.

The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) is celebrated Ashadha Purnima at National Museum

- The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), under the aegis of Ministry of Culture, Government of India, celebrated Ashadha Purnima on 3 July, 2023 as the Dharma Chakra Pravartana Divas at National Museum, Janpath, New Delhi. It is the annual flagship event of IBC and the second most sacred day for Buddhists after the Buddha Purnima or the Vaishakha Purnima.
- A video address by the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu will be presented at the programme. The programme highlight will be the screening of the film on IBC's special project in Lumbini (Nepal) – "India International Centre for Buddhist Culture and Heritage". Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the Centre at Lumbini in Nepal last year on Buddh Purnima.
- The programme will include Dhamma talk on the Significance of Ashadha Purnima by His Holiness 12th Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa and the Special Address by Minister of Culture and External Affairs Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi. Many other dignitaries and Patriarchs of Buddhist Sanghas, eminent Masters, Scholars, and diplomatic representatives based in New Delhi will be participating in the event

Bhupender Yadav inaugurated the three-day celebration programme of the 108th ZSI day in Kolkata

- The Union Minister for Environment & Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment Shri Bhupender Yadav today – July 3. inaugurated the three-day

celebration programme of the 108th ZSI day in Kolkata in presence of Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Director General of Forests and Special Secretary, Shri Chandra Prakash Goyal, Director, Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) Dr Dhriti Banerjee and Director, Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Dr Ashiho Asosii Mao.

- Minister categorically pointed out that we must protect the Indian faunal diversity to protect ourselves as climate change has busted the myth that humans are superior to nature.
- He gave an instance put forward by renowned Anthropologist Eduardo Kohn, who said forests can think as the trees interact with their environment because they have specialised characteristics of pest resistance. The forest characteristics, he said, remind us of what Gandhiji once said-‘In nature, there is enough for everyone’s need’.
- The Union Minister gave the instance of discovery of DDT, the pesticide, during World War II and how the eminent biologist and conservationist Rachel Carson made people aware of the harm it causes to the environment in her book named ‘Silent Spring’ in 1958, a testimony to human arrogance towards nature.

Defence ministry inks Rs 2,725 cr contract with MDL for refit of submarine

- The defence ministry on has inked a Rs 2,725 crore contract with the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) for refit of submarine INS Shankush, - Shankush is a Sub-Surface Killer (SSK) class submarine.
- It said the submarine post MRLC will be delivered in 2026.
- After completion of MRLC, INS Shankush will be combat ready and will join the active fleet of the Indian Navy with upgraded combat capability,
- This project is an important step towards development of MDL as Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) Hub for supporting the industrial ecosystem of India,

India’s first ‘Police Drone Unit’ launched in Chennai

- In what is believed to be first of its kind initiative in India, Greater Chennai Police on Thursday established a ‘Drone Police Unit’ to assist cops in aerial surveillance. This will particularly be helpful in case of large gatherings, real-time checking of vehicle registration data and spotting of suspects.
- The project, which costs approximately Rs 3.6 crore according a press release by the GCP, was inaugurated by outgoing Tamil Nadu Director General of Police (DGP) C Sylendra Babu, in the presence of Chennai Police Commissioner Shankar Jiwal at Besant Avenue, Adyar.
- According to the police, a total of nine drones under three categories are available in this unit: Quick Response Surveillance Drones (6), Heavy Lift Multicopter Drone (1) and Long Range Survey Wing Plane (2). These are all equipped with built-in artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities and can be operated up to a distance of 5-10 km from the ground station.

SPORTS

India bags 14 medals including nine gold at Sri Lanka Athletics National Championships

- Indian contingent finished their Sri Lanka Athletics National Championships with 14 medals including nine gold, four silvers and a bronze. Indian athletes clinched six medals on the final day of the event at the Sugathadasa Stadium in Colombo. The Indian 4x400 meter mixed relay team of Amoj Jacob, Aishwarya Mishra, Muhammed Anas and Himanshi Malik won the first gold medal of the day. The event also featured a second Indian relay team comprising Nihal Joel William, Subha Venkatesan, Mijo Chacko Kurian and Vithya Ramraj, who bagged the silver medal. Amoj Jacob, an Asian Athletics Championships gold medallist, then teamed up with Muhammed Anas, Rajesh Ramesh and Muhammed Ajmal to secure the gold medal in the 4x400 meter men's relay event.
- In the 4x400 meter women's relay event, the Indian quartet of Sonia Baishya, Aishwarya Mishra, Subha V and Himanshi Malik bagged the gold medal. Interestingly, in the same event, Olympian Jisna Mathew and Vithya Ramraj of India teamed up with Sri Lanka's WS Himaya Fernando and K Shanika Lakshani to come in third. India's T Santhosh Kumar also finished first in the men's 400 meter hurdles. India's javelin thrower Kishore Kumar Jena, who won the gold medal on Friday, was awarded the Best Male Thrower trophy.

India bags six medals including four Golds at World University Games in Chengdu, China

- Indian shooters and archers bagged six medals including four golds at the World University Games in Chengdu, China today. Shooters Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, Divyansh Singh Panwar and Arjun Babuta joined forces to outclass local favourites China to win the 10m air rifle men's team gold. Aishwary also secured gold in the 10m air rifle men's individual event.
- Avneet Kaur pipped USA's Alyssa Grace Sturgill in a thrilling shoot off to clinch the compound women's individual gold. Sangampreet Bisla and Aman Saini clinched the gold and bronze medals in the men's individual event. India have won 17 medals, nine gold, three silver and five bronze, and are second in the tournament. Hosts China lead the standings with a haul of 21 medals.

Aditya Samant becomes India's 83rd chess Grandmaster

- Indian chess moved ahead on the board, so to speak, as Aditya S Samant became the nation's 83rd chess Grandmaster,
- An International Master (IM), the 17-year-old became a GM when he commenced his ninth round game against compatriot Aryan Chopra at the BielChess MTO 2023 tournament in Switzerland
- Samant had drawn his eighth round game against Bu Xiangzhi. He only had to play the ninth round, no matter the result, to get the GM nor

- To become a GM, a player has to get three GM norms and cross the live rating of 2,500 Elo points. The Maharashtra youngster had already crossed the 2500 Elo mark in the live ratings and had secured two GM norms.

India finish 2nd on medals tally at ISSF World Junior Championship in South Korea

- India finished 2nd on the medals tally at the recently concluded ISSF Junior Shooting World Championships 2023 in Changwon, South Korea. Indian shooters bagged 17 medals, which include 6 Gold, 6 Silver, and 5 Bronze.
- The championships saw 90 Indian shooters vie for medals in pistol, rifle, and shotgun competitions in the under-21 age category. The majority of the medalists were Khelo India athletes. Seven Indians managed to bag more than one medal. Abhinav Shaw and Kamaljeet won two golds each. Sainyam won three medals — gold in the 10m air pistol women, and a bronze each in the 10m air pistol mixed team and women's team events.

Sumit Nagal Wins Tampere Open 2023, His Fourth ATP Challenger Title

- Sumit Nagal clinched ATP Challenger men's singles title after winning the final of Tampere Open 2023 in Finland,. It was the Indian tennis player's fourth ATP Challenger Tour title. Sumit Nagal, 25, won his second ATP Challenger event of the year, defeating Czech Republic's Dalibor Svrčina 6-4, 7-5 in the final.
- Sumit Nagal won the Garden Open in Rome in April, ending a four-year title drought. The Indian tennis player's other two ATP Challenger wins include the Buenos Aires and Bengaluru Challengers in 2019 and 2017, respectively.
- Following April's win at Rome and Sunday's triumph in Tampere, Sumit Nagal also became the first Indian tennis player to win two ATP Challenger titles on European soil.
- Sumit Nagal, who is India's top-ranked men's singles player at world No. 231, made a slow start to the match and was trailing world No. 193 Svrčina 4-1 in the first game. The Indian, however, rallied to turn things around to take the first set.

Shubhankar Sharma records best finish by an Indian in The 2023 Open golf Championship

- Shubhankar Sharma achieved a remarkable feat, securing the best result ever by an Indian golfer at the Open At the Royal Liverpool Golf Club in Merseyside, England. He finished in a tied-eighth position alongside Cameron Young from USA. Sharma displayed his skill and determination, carding an impressive 68-71-70-70 to finish just five strokes behind the leaders.
- Shubhankar Sharma's impressive Top-8 performance at the 151st Open marked just the third instance of an Indian golfer securing a top-10 finish in a major tournament. Prior to this, Anirban Lahiri achieved a Top-5 result in 2015, and Jeev Milkha Singh attained a T-9 position at the 2008 PGA Championship in Michigan, USA.

- Jyoti Randhawa previously held the record for the best finish by an Indian golfer at the Open, securing a tied-27th position at Royal Troon in 2004. Anirban Lahiri's tied fifth-place finish at the PGA Championship in Wisconsin, USA in 2015 stands as the finest performance by an Indian in a men's major tournament.

Max Verstappen won the Hungarian GP

- Max Verstappen won the Hungarian GP at the Hungaroring, by a comfortable 33.731 secs margin over McLaren's Lando Norris. Verstappen's lead at the top of the standings grows to an even more gargantuan 110 points, and the Dutchman seems firmly on course to pick up a second world championship in a row. Teammate Perez also furthered his advantage over third place man Fernando Alonso, who finished a disappointing ninth in Hungary

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty win Korea Open 2023 men's doubles title in Yeosu Korea

- Asian Champions Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty defeated world no. 1 Indonesian duo Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Rian Ardianto in a thrilling 3-game men's doubles final 17-21, 21-13, 21-14 to clinch the Korea Open 2023 title in Yeosu, Korea on 23rd July 2023.
- The duo entered the summit clash after a thrilling straight-game win over the world number two Chinese pair of Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang. The world number three Indian pair notched up a 21-15, 24-22 win over the second-seeded Chinese in a 40-minute duel at the Jinnam stadium in Yeosu. It was Satwik and Chirag's first win over the Chinese pair following two earlier defeats. Satwik and Chirag, who has won the Indonesia Super 1000 and Swiss Open Super 500 titles this year will look to add another feather to their already decorated cap with a win in the Korea Open.

Virat Kohli becomes first batter to score century in his 500th international match

- Former India captain Virat Kohli scripted history on Friday, July 21 by becoming the first batter in the history of the sport to score a century in his 500th international match. Kohli got to his 29th Test century on Day 2 of the 2nd Test between India and the West Indies in Port of Spain.
- It was also Virat Kohli's 15th Test century in overseas conditions, his first away from home since December 2018 in Perth. Kohli got to the landmark in 180 balls as he played a crucial knock after India lost 4 wickets in a session on Day 1 of the 2nd Test in Port of Spain, which also marked the 100th Test match between the two teams.

Virat Kohli becomes 10th cricketer to make 500 international appearances

- Indian cricketing legend Virat Kohli achieved a significant milestone by becoming the 10th cricketer in history to make 500 international appearances. He reached this remarkable feat during India's second and final Test match against the West Indies at the Queen's Park Oval in Port of Spain. With this accomplishment, Kohli

joins an elite list of four Indian players, including the iconic Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, and MS Dhoni. Kohli's exceptional career includes 274 ODIs, 115 T20Is, and 111 Test matches, showcasing his immense contribution to Indian cricket. This historic achievement further solidifies Virat Kohli's status as one of the game's greatest players.

- Tendulkar leads the list, which is dominated by Asian batters, with 664 appearances. Sri Lankan legend Mahela Jayawardene is the only other to make more than 600 international matches.

Indian Surf Team wins bronze medal at Asian Surfing Championship in Maldives

- Indian Surf Team won the bronze medal at the Asian Surfing Championship, held at Thulisdhoo Island in Maldives. 18 countries from Asia took part in this championship.
- The Surfing Federation of India sent a team comprising 4 senior Surfers in the men's category and 2 Surfers in the Under 18 category. 5 out of the 6 Surfers were from Tamilnadu.
- Srikanth from Kovalam, Tamil Nadu made it to the semi-finals in the Men's Category.
- The President of the Surfing Federation of India Arun Vasu said that Surfing team finished overall 3rd with a bronze medal.
- Indian Surfers will now get ready for the first-ever World Surfing League (WSL) event in India to be held in Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu from August 14 to 20 this year

DD Sports secures Television rights for FIFA Women's World Cup 2023

- DD Sports has partnered with 1Stadia to broadcast the highly anticipated 9th edition of the FIFA Women's World Cup, bringing joy and excitement to fans.
- The tournament, starting on July 20, 2023, will mark the inaugural occasion when the World Cup is co-hosted by two countries, namely Australia and New Zealand.
- 1Stadia has granted streaming platform FanCode the sub-licensing rights for streaming the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, while public broadcaster DD Sports has been entrusted with the sub-licensing rights for television broadcasting.
- About: DD Sports - DD Sports was launched on 18 March 1998. It operated as an encrypted pay channel from 2000 to 2003, but on 15 July 2003, it transformed into the sole free-to-air sports channel in the country.
- Given that Doordarshan Sports is easily accessible and available free-to-air, football enthusiasts from households across the nation can seamlessly tune in to catch the tournament. The channel's coverage extends to about 38 countries worldwide through the INSAT-4B satellite.

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy smashes Guinness world record for fastest badminton shot during Korea Open

- Indian badminton player Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, popularly known as Satwik, smashed the Guinness World Record for the fastest hit by a male player in the sport during the Korea Open, where Satwik recorded a mind-boggling speed of 565 km/h with his smash.
- This record-breaking smash has not only put Satwik on the global map but also broken a decade-long record previously held by Malaysian player Tan Boon Heong. In May 2013, Heong set the record with a smash speed of 493 km/h. However, Satwik's recent performance has surpassed this by a significant margin, marking a new era in the sport of badminton.

Ajit Singh won gold medal in Para Athletics Championship in Paris

- Indian athlete Ajit Singh won the gold medal in the final of men's javelin throw F46 at the Para Athletics Championships in Paris.
- Ajit Singh topped the event with a throw of 65.41. He broke the previous championship record of 61.89 held by Chunliang Guo of China. Rinku, another Indian athlete, won the silver medal with a best throw of 65.38. Sri Lanka's Dinesh Priyanta Herath and Rinku finished joint second in the event. Sunder Singh Gujjar, representing India, finished fourth with a throw of 61.81.s
- Completing India's gold medal haul, Ajeet Singh triumphed in the Men's Javelin Throw F46 Final. Sunder Singh Gurjar showcased an impressive performance as well, finishing fourth in the same event and securing qualification for the 2024 Paris Paralympics.
- This outstanding performance by the Indian contingent marks their best-ever achievement in the competition, surpassing their previous record of nine medals in the 2019 edition held in Dubai.

India finish 3rd behind China and Japan with 27 medals at Asian Athletics Championships

- India won 6 gold medals at the Asian Athletics Championships, Japan topped the table with 37 medals, including 16 Golds, India won 13 medals on the final day of the championship in Thailand.
- Unheralded Abha Khatua equalled shot put national record while finishing second in a surprise performance while Jyothi Yarraji and Parul Chaudhary clinched their second medals -- both silver -- as India ended their campaign with 27 medals at the Asian Athletics Championships campaign at the third spot in Thailand..
- The 28-year-old Khatua made a huge improvement of nearly a metre -- 93 cm -- from her earlier lifetime best of 17.13m as she sent the 4kg iron ball to a distance of 18.06m in her fourth throw to finish second behind Song Jiayuan (18.88m) of China. Her second-best throw of the day was 17.10m.

World number one Carlos Alcaraz won his first Wimbledon title

- Carlos Alcaraz beats Novak Djokovic in five-set thriller, wins maiden title at The Championships Wimbledon 2023 Men's Final, Alcaraz fought from a set down in an instant classic to end Djokovic's winning run in SW19, with the match played across almost five hours of breathtaking drama. Before the final, Djokovic had won 34 consecutive matches at Wimbledon and had not lost on Centre Court since 2013, but Alcaraz overturned history to win his second grand slam title. Djokovic had also won his previous 104 grand slam matches after winning the opening set.
- In doing so, the 20-year-old Spaniard brings one of the most dominant eras of tennis history to an end. Alcaraz is the first player outside of the sport's 'big four' of Djokovic, Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and Andy Murray to win the Wimbledon men's singles title since 2002. Djokovic has been bidding to join Federer by equalling his men's record of eight singles titles, but was denied by an inspired Alcaraz.

Yashasvi Jaiswal became the 17th Indian to score a century on Test debut and the third designated opener

- Yashasvi Jaiswal rewrote the history books by becoming first-ever Indian opener to score a Test century on debut away from home. The left-hander, who was handed the Test cap by captain Rohit Sharma on Wednesday, reached the landmark on Day 2 of the first Test against West Indies at Windsor Park in Dominica. Jaiswal got a single off fellow debutant Alick Athanaze to complete his century in the 70th over of India's innings late on Thursday. He got there off 215 balls.
- Overall, Jaiswal became the 17th Indian to score a century on Test debut and the third designated opener. However, he is the first Indian opener to get to three figures in his maiden Test away from home. Shikhar Dhawan and Prithvi Shaw had registered their debut Test centuries at Mohali and Rajkot against Australia and West Indies respectively

Marketa Vondrousova beats Ons Jabeur to become first unseeded woman to win Wimbledon title

- Marketa Vondrousova becomes the Wimbledon champion 2023 by beating last year's runner-up Ons Jabeur 6-4, 6-4 in the finals. Jabeur held the break of serve lead twice in the opening set of the women's singles final on Centre Court before the unseeded Marketa Vondrousova bounced back to win 16 of the last 18 points, and four straight games, to grab the opening set 6-4. She set three times in the first set. In 2023, Wimbledon will award an all-time high of 44.7 million pounds.
- Marketa Vondrousova becomes Wimbledon champion, the first unseeded player to do so in the Open Era. She beats last year's runner-up Ons Jabeur 6-4, 6-4 in the final. Marketa Vondrousova is the first unseeded player to do so in the Open Era.

- **About: Marketa Vondrousova** - Marketa Vondrousova was born on June 28, 1999. Currently, she is 24 years old. She hails from the Czech Republic and is a Czech. Marketa was born in Sokolov, a small town located in the Karlovy Vary Region of the Czech Republic. Her parents are David Vondrousova and Jindriska Vondrousova. She married her longtime partner Stepan Simek on July 16, 2022. The couple got engaged after Tokyo Olympics 2021.

India finish with 9 medals at World Deaf Youth Badminton Championships in Brazil

- India finished with nine medals (four silver and five bronze) in the third edition of the World Deaf Youth Badminton Championships, which took place from July 10 to 12. The official Twitter handle of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) shared the news on Thursday, July 13.
- The tournament was staged by Para de Minas, a municipality town in Brazil. Aaditya in Girl's Singles, Piyush & Shreya in Mixed Doubles, Soumyadeep & Piyush in Men's Doubles and Jerlin & Aaditya in Women's Doubles won the silver medals.
- Soumyadeep in Men's Singles, Jerlin in Women's Singles, Shreya in Women's Singles, Soumyadeep & Gauranshi in Mixed Doubles and Gauranshi & Shreya in Women's Doubles finished the event with bronze medals.

Wanindu Hasaranga and Ashley Gardner awarded ICC 'Player of the Month' for June

- The ICC (International Cricket Council) honoured Sri Lankan spinner Wanindu Hasaranga and Australian women's team all-rounder Ashley Gardner with the 'Player of the Month' awards in June for their exceptional performances.
- Wanindu Hasaranga received the prestigious accolade for his remarkable achievements during the World Cup qualifier matches held in Zimbabwe.
- Ashley Gardner became the first player to win the Player of the Month award three times. She was recognized for her outstanding contribution during the Women's Ashes series.
- The ICC honoured both the players during the month of June for their remarkable skill, performance and impact on their respective teams.

India bags maximum 11 medals in World Archery Youth Championships, 2023

- In the 'World Archery Youth Championship', 2023 held in Ireland, India has secured the second position in the championship by winning the maximum number of 11 medals.
- The 'World Archery Youth Championships', 2023 is scheduled to be held from 3 to 9 July 2023. India finished second in the championship:
- India finished with its highest ever medal tally of 11 medals in this championship. Despite this, India finished second behind Korea in this championship.
- Korea finished first with a total of 10 medals including six gold and four silver while India finished second with a total of 11 medals including six gold, one silver and four bronze.

Max Verstappen Wins For First Time At Silverstone Circuit: British Grand Prix 2023

- Max Verstappen of Red Bull survived an early push from McLaren opponent Lando Norris to win the 2023 British Grand Prix at Silverstone, marking his maiden victory at this event and extending his current winning streak to six races. This also marked Red Bull's 10th consecutive win this season and their 11th consecutive F1 win.
- Norris took the lead from Verstappen soon after the start lights went green, with McLaren teammate Oscar Piastri almost matching Verstappen, leading to a McLaren sandwich with Red Bull as the filling during the opening four laps, but the reigning double world champion quickly fought back for the lost position. Verstappen, with a little help from the DRS of his RB18, reclaimed P1 and cruised to victory with the fastest lap of the race.

Parth Salunkhe becomes first Indian to win Youth World Championship in recurve category

- Top-ranked Parth Salunkhe warded off a strong challenge from Korean Song In Jun 7-3 in the final to become the recurve under-21 men's individual champion in the World youth archery championships in Limerick, Ireland, on Sunday. He was the first Indian male archer to achieve the feat.
- Fighting back twice, Salunkhe hit the bull's eye twice to beat the Korean for the world title. Earlier, he received two byes and got the better of Czech Republic's Richard Krejci 7-1, Turkey's Mustafa Ozdemir 6-5 (9*-9, shot closer to the centre), Chinese Taipei's Yang Kai-Han 6-4 and Germany's Mathias Kramer 6-4.
- Bhajan Kaur defeated Chinese Taipei's Su Hsin-yu 7-1 to take the women's under-21 individual bronze.
- Indian archers gathered the most number of medals, a total of 11 including six golds, one silver and four bronzes. It finished second behind Korea, which collected six golds and four silvers.

Lakshya Sen staves off Li Shi Feng challenge to win Canada Open title

- Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen dished out a badminton masterpiece to notch up his second BWF Super 500 title with a straight-game win over Li Shi Feng of China in the final of the Canada Open.
- The 21-year-old from Almora, who had claimed his maiden Super 500 title at the 2022 India Open, mixed incredible speed and power to outshine reigning All England champion Feng 21-18, 22-20 in a thrilling summit clash.
- "Coming into the Olympic qualification year, it was tough as things didn't go my way. So this win will be a big boost to my confidence," Sen told PTI after the win.
- "I had to dig deep in some matches, the conditions were different and getting used to it was important," the ace shuttler said.
- This was Sen's first title since claiming his maiden gold medal at the Commonwealth Games in August last year. He is also the second singles player

from the country to win a title this year, following HS Prannoy's victory at Malaysia Masters in May.

Parth Salunkhe became the first male archer to win a gold medal in the recurve event

- Parth Salunkhe has become the first male archer to win a gold medal in the recurve event at the World Youth Archery Championships to be held in Ireland from 3 to 9 July 2023. India finished with its highest ever medal tally of 11 medals in this championship.
- The 19-year-old from Satara in Maharashtra won the gold medal on July 9 after defeating a Korean in the Under-21 men's recurve individual final. Salunkhe, who topped the ranking round, defeated seventh seed Song Injun 7-3 in a hard-fought five-set match. India also won a bronze medal in the Under-21 women's recurve individual event when Bhaja Kaur defeated Su Hsien-yu of Chinese Taipei 7-1.
- India finished with six gold, one silver and four bronze medals, the highest in terms of total medal tally. In terms of rankings, they were second only to Korea, which took the pole position with six gold and four silver medals.

Gukesh defeats Viswanathan Anand in the eighth round of Rapid event of the 2023 SuperUnited Rapid and Blitz tournament

- Young Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh scored a memorable win over illustrious compatriot and idol Viswanathan Anand in the eighth round of the Rapid event of the 2023 SuperUnited Rapid and Blitz tournament, part of the Grand Chess Tour.
- The 40-move win for the 17-year-old Gukesh late on Friday was his first ever over Anand and came in his maiden tournament match against the five-time world champion. The two Indians have 10 points each and are tied for fourth place.
- Fabiano Caruana and Ian Nepomniachtchi remained co-leaders after the final day of the Rapid event, each with 12 points.
- While the day 1 leader Anand stumbled and fell two points behind the leaders, world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen bounced back into form to take the clear third position going into two full days of blitz next.
- Apart from the loss to Gukesh, Anand could only draw his games against Jan-Krzysztof Duda (Poland) and Nepomniachtchi in rounds seven and nine respectively.
- Gukesh started the final day of the Rapid section with a loss to Caruana before stunning Anand and holding Duda to a draw.

Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal shocking retirement

- Bangladesh one-day captain Tamim Iqbal announced his shock retirement from international cricket on Thursday, three months before the team begins its 50-overs World Cup campaign in India.
- The 34-year-old was in tears as he announced his decision to end his 16-year international career in a news conference.

- Bangladesh, whose World Cup campaign begins on October 7 against Afghanistan in Dharamsala, is yet to reveal who will lead the side after Tamim's exit.
- A leading contender is Shakib Al Hasan, who captains the T20 side. Left-handed opener Tamim has scored 15,000-plus runs in international cricket, including 25 centuries.
- His ODI tally of 8,313 runs is the highest by a Bangladesh batsman and his 14 centuries in this format is also higher than any of his compatriots.
- Tamim skipped the one-off Test against Afghanistan last month with a stiff back and scored 13 in Wednesday's one-day international against Afghanistan in Chattogram, in what turned out his last international outing.

Ajit Agarkar appointed India men's chairman of selectors by BCCI;

- Ajit Agarkar, the former India T20 World Cup winning all-rounder, has been appointed as the BCCI's new chairman of selectors for men's team. Agarkar, 45, takes over the post which has been lying vacant since February following Chetan Sharma's ouster after a sting operation carried out on him by a TV channel landed him in hot waters.
- The BCCI rules mandate that the most capped Test player in the five-member committee should be named its head. Once it was decided that Indian cricket needed a chairman with a stronger profile than Shiv Sundar Das (23 Tests), who had been serving as interim head, the board officials found it tough to get a replacement from North Zone which Sharma had represented.
- Agarkar, a veteran of 191 ODIs and 26 Tests, was the frontrunner for the position after being interviewed by the Cricket Advisory Committee which consists of Sulakshana Naik, Ashok Malhotra and Jatin Paranjape. Agarkar, who has picked 349 international wickets in a career lasting nine years boasts a strong resume, having earlier prospered in the limited administration roles assigned to him. From 2017 to 2019, Agarkar served as Mumbai's chairman of selectors and was part of the Delhi Capitals along with coach Ricky Ponting and director of cricket Sourav Ganguly.

SAFF Championship Final: India win 9th title, beat Kuwait

- India defeated Kuwait by 5-4 in the penalty shootout of the final of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru. The match ended 1-1 in regulation time of the summit clash, which led to players from both the sides to take penalty shots from the spot for the coveted title.
- After five rounds of penalty kicks, the scoreline remained 4-4 and sudden death rule was applied.
- Mahesh Naorem scored but Sandhu saved Kuwait captain Khaled Hajiah's shot to the wild celebration of the home fans and at the India dug out.
- In the regulation time, Shabaib Al Khaldi had put Kuwait in the lead in the 14th minute before Lallianzuala Chhangte equalised in the 39th minute.

- This was the second time India won in the penalty shootout. They had made it to Tuesday's summit clash after beating Lebanon 4-2 in penalty shootout in the semifinal on July 1. Sandhu had also made a crucial save in the shootout then.

Max Verstappen wins Austrian GP 2023, takes dominance to a new level

- Max Verstappen, the reigning Formula One champion, continued his impressive performance by securing a commanding victory at the Austrian Grand Prix 2023. This win further solidified his pursuit of a third consecutive world title. Starting from the pole position for the fourth consecutive race, Verstappen demonstrated his dominance by achieving his fifth consecutive win and seventh win out of nine races in the current season.
- With this remarkable performance, Verstappen extended his lead in the championship standings to 81 points over his teammate Sergio Perez, who also drives for the Red Bull team. Charles Leclerc, the previous year's winner at this circuit, finished in second place, crossing the finish line 5.2 seconds after Verstappen. Meanwhile, Sergio Perez secured the third position, finishing 17.2 seconds behind the leader.

132nd Durand Cup tournament organized in Kolkata

- The "Trophy Tour" of the 132nd edition of Durand Cup, India's oldest football tournament, was flagged off on 30 June 2023 at a function held at Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt.
- It was flagged off by Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pandey, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhary and President of All India Football Federation (AIFF) Kalyan Choubey.
- This tournament will be organized from 03 August to 03 September 2023 in Kolkata.
- Foreign teams in Durand Cup - 24 teams including teams from Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh will participate in the 132nd edition of the tournament.
- Foreign teams are participating in the tournament after a gap of 27 years. The tournament is open to all club teams. It is organized by the Durand Football Tournament Society (DFTS) under the aegis of the All India Football Federation (AIFF).
- Basically the tournament has always been a symbol of excellence, sportsmanship and high point of competitiveness in the field of sports.
- Durand Cup Tournament - The Durand Cup, the world's third oldest and Asia's oldest football tournament, was first held in the year 1888 at Dagshai (Himachal Pradesh).
- It was named after Mortimer Durand, who was then the Foreign Secretary in charge of India. The tournament was initially held for British soldiers, but was later opened to civilians. Mohun Bagan and East Bengal are the most successful teams in the history of the Durand Cup having won it sixteen times.

Yuki Bhambri wins maiden ATP doubles title in Spain

- Indian tennis player Yuki Bhambri made a remarkable breakthrough in his career by capturing his maiden title on the ATP World Tour. Partnering with South African player Lloyd Harris, Bhambri secured the doubles trophy at the Mallorca Championships.
- The Indo-South African duo displayed exceptional skill and resilience to defeat the Dutch-Austrian pair of Robine Hasse and Philipp Oswald in a thrilling final on the grass courts. This victory serves as a significant milestone for Bhambri, whose singles career has been hampered by injuries. By transitioning to doubles, Bhambri aims to prolong his tennis career and make a mark in the competitive world of doubles tennis.

Neeraj Chopra clinches second Diamond League title of the year with best throw of 87.66m

- Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra obtained the top spot in Lausanne Diamond League 2023 with a best throw of 87.66 m . The star Indian player is coming back from a muscle injury he had sustained during training. The injury forced Chopra to withdraw from three events in the month of June namely FBK Games, Paavo Nurmi Games and the Ostrava Golden Spike.
- Neeraj Chopra looked a little out of sorts on his first attempt, which was ruled a foul. He opened his account with a throw of 83.52m in his second attempt, which put him in third place behind Julian Weber (86.20m) and Jakub Vadlejch (84.71m).
- Chopra moved into second place with a throw of 85.04m on his third attempt, just behind Weber, and had the chance to take the lead on his fourth attempt. However, the 25-year-old failed to make a mark on his fourth attempt.

BCCI announces Dream11 as new lead sponsor for Team India; replaces Byju's

- As Team India gears up for the first Test series against West Indies, the Board of Control of Cricket (BCCI) announced the change in the Indian cricket team's lead sponsor. The fantasy gaming platform Dream11 has replaced the ed-tech platform Byju as the next lead sponsor for Team India. The change in lead sponsor comes ahead of crucial Test series against West Indies which will be the first task for Team India in the ICC World Test Championship 2023-25 cycle.
- About: Dream11 - Dream11 is an Indian fantasy sports platform that allows users to play fantasy cricket, hockey, football, kabaddi, handball, basketball, volleyball, rugby, futsal, American football and baseball. In April 2019, Dream11 became the first Indian fantasy sport company to become a unicorn.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

World's largest private communications satellite 'Jupiter 3' launched

- SpaceX, Elon Musk's space exploration company, launched the world's largest commercial communications satellite from LC-39A, Kennedy Space Center, Florida, USA. The Falcon Heavy rocket was used for the launch, carrying Maxar Technologies' biggest satellite to date, named Jupiter 3.
- About: JUPITER 3 - Also referred to as 'EcoStar XXIV', is a satellite of Hughes, an EchoStar company. As the next-generation Ultra High Density Satellite (UHDS), it is designed to provide gigabytes of connectivity to customers across North and South America.
- EchoStar Corporation, an American company, serves as a global provider of satellite communication and Internet services through its business segments, namely Hughes Network Systems and EchoStar Satellite Services.

World's largest private satellite Jupiter-3 set to launch

- Elon Musk-led SpaceX will launch the world's largest private satellite to space on Thursday. The satellite will lift-off aboard the company's Falcon Heavy rocket from Launch Complex 39A in Florida.
- This marks the seventh launch for SpaceX's triple-booster rocket, Falcon Heavy, which first made headlines with its debut in 2018.
- The launch is scheduled for 8:34â€¦am IST on July 27. In a departure from usual practice, SpaceX will expend its core booster in the Atlantic Ocean following the first-stage separation, rather than attempting a drone-ship landing at sea.

India to launch 7 Singapore satellites from ISRO's spaceport on July 30

- India would launch PSLV-C56 carrying DS-SAR satellite from Singapore, along with six co-passengers, from the first launchpad of the ISRO's Sriharikota spaceport at 6.30 am on July 30.
- The DS-SAR satellite is developed under a partnership between Singapore's Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA) (representing the Government of Singapore) and ST Engineering.
- Once deployed and operational, it will be used to support the satellite imagery requirements of various agencies within the Government of Singapore. ST Engineering will use it for multi-modal and higher responsiveness imagery and geospatial services for their commercial customers.
- DS-SAR carries a Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) payload developed by Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). This allows the DS-SAR to provide for all-weather day and night coverage, and capable of imaging at one metre resolution at full polarimetry.

China launches world's 1st methane-powered rocket to space

- China successfully launched the world's first methane-powered rocket into space.

- The development marked the first orbital mission fueled by methane, a cutting-edge technology that until now had only been developed by the American companies SpaceX and Blue Origin.
- The rocket, named Zhuque-2 Y2, lifted off from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in China's Gobi desert, said its manufacturer LandSpace, a private Chinese space company.
- LandSpace claimed that the success of the mission verified various schemes of the rocket and laid a solid foundation for the development of reusable rockets in the next stage, according to national broadcaster CGTN.
- The rocket uses liquid methane as fuel and liquid oxygen as an oxidizer – a non-toxic mix of reusable components also known as “methalox.”
- The launcher has a two-stage configuration, with a diameter of 3.35 meters, a height of 49.5 meters, a takeoff weight of 219 tons, and a takeoff thrust of 268 tons.

Chandrayaan-3 successfully launched

- The Chandrayaan-3- India's third mission to the moon took off successfully from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh on July 14. The Vikram lander of the mission is expected to soft land on the surface of the South Pole region of the Moon on around August 23-24. The LVM3 rocket broke free from the second launch pad at the Space Centre at about 2.35 p.m. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has hailed the relentless dedication of India's scientists on the launch of Chandrayaan-3
- The success of this launch is not just important to India but also the world as crucial information from the mission will help future space missions globally. This mission demonstrates that India is competent enough in scientific advancements. LVM -3 rocket is just ready to undertake the mission.

Elon Musk launches his new artificial intelligence company, xAI

- Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, and owner of Twitter, on Wednesday announced the debut of a new artificial intelligence company, xAI, with the goal to “understand the true nature of the universe.” According to the company's website, Musk and his team will share more information in a live Twitter Spaces chat on Friday.
- Team members behind xAI are alumni of DeepMind, OpenAI, Google Research, Microsoft Research, Twitter and Tesla, and have worked on projects including DeepMind's AlphaCode and OpenAI's GPT-3.5 and GPT-4 chatbots. Musk seems to be positioning xAI to compete with companies like OpenAI, Google and Anthropic, which are behind leading chatbots like ChatGPT, Bard and Claude.

Virgin Galactic completes first manned mission to space:

- Virgin Galactic, the space venture established by British entrepreneur Richard Branson, has achieved a significant milestone as it successfully completed its first manned mission to the edge of space. The inaugural commercial flight,

which took place on June 29, marks a momentous achievement for Virgin Galactic after two decades of dedicated efforts

- The mission featured two Italian Air Force personnel who were funded by the organisation. Colonel Walter Villadei, who is also slated for a future paid SpaceX mission to orbit, and Lieutenant Colonel Angelo Landolfi, a physician trained as a crew surgeon for Russian cosmonauts, were among the passengers.
- Unlike its competitor Blue Origin, founded by Jeff Bezos, this particular mission had a research-oriented focus rather than catering to celebrities and affluent thrill-seekers, according to CNN. Nevertheless, future flights by Virgin Galactic are anticipated to encompass a diverse array of high-profile clientele.
- The journey unfolded in multiple stages, commencing at Virgin Galactic's spaceport in New Mexico. The passengers boarded VSS Unity, which was securely attached beneath the wing of the enormous twin-fuselage mothership known as VMS Eve.

OBITUARY

Renowned Marathi Writer Shirish Kanekar Passes Away

- Shirish Kanekar, Veteran Marathi writer and columnist passed away in Mumbai, Maharashtra at the age of 80. He was born on June 6, 1943 in Pune, Maharashtra. He worked at Marathi and English language publications like Loksatta, Indian Express, Samana, and Free Press Journal. He was popular for his newspaper columns on Cinema, Cricket and Politics. Pune, Maharashtra.
- His notable works include: Humorous articles like 'Kanevari', 'Fillambaji', and 'Shirishasan'; Bollywood movies such as "Nut Bolt Bolpat," "Kanevari," and "Cricket Vedh"; Books such as Irsalaki; Surparambya. His collection of stories titled 'Lagaon Batti,' was recognised and honoured with the Maharashtra Literary Parishad Award for Best Comedy- Joshi Award.
- Shirish completed LLB from Mumbai University. After that, he worked as a journalist with English news publications like Indian Express, Daily, Free Press Journal, and Syndicated Press News Agency. He has written columns for newspapers like Loksatta, Maharashtra Times, Lokmat, Saamna, Pudaari, Weekly Manohar, and Weekly Lokprabha. His collection of stories, Lagav Batti was awarded the Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad. He also received the Joshi Award.

Veteran journalist Shirish Kanekar passes away in Mumbai

- Veteran journalist-author-columnist Shirish Kanekar passed away in Mumbai due to a heart attack. He was 80 years old.
- Kanekar worked at Marathi and English language publications like Loksatta, Indian Express, Samana, and Free Press Journal. His collection of stories 'Lagaon Batti' was awarded the Maharashtra Literary Parishad Award for Best Comedy.
- He was known for his books on cricket, Bollywood movies such as 'Nut Bolt Bolpat', 'Kanevari', 'Cricket Vedh', among others. He is survived by wife and two children. Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais and Chief Minister Eknath Shinde expressed their condolences on the death of the Veteran author.

RSS ideologue Madan Das Devi passes away

- Veteran Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) leader Madan Das Devi who had served as the joint secretary of the outfit, passed away ,
- Hailing from Maharashtra, the 81-year old Hindutva ideologue died at the Rashtrottan Hospital after a prolonged illness, an RSS functionary told PTI. He said Devi's mortal remains will be kept at the RSS local headquarters, Keshava Kripa from 1.30 pm to 4 pm before being flown to Pune for the last rites on Tuesday
- The RSS ideologue was instrumental in developing leadership skills among top-rung BJP and RSS leaders. A full-time Pracharak (campaigner), Devi was staying in Bengaluru for treatment of his old age-related ailment.
- Devi had served as the RSS joint general secretary and organisation secretary of the RSS' student wing Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP). He was responsible for developing leadership skills among the national level top rung BJP leaders

Former Australia wicketkeeper Brian Taber passes away at the aged of 83

- Former Australia and New South Wales wicketkeeper Brian Taber has passed away at the age of 83. Taber, who played 16 Test matches for Australia between 1966 and 1970. He made his Test debut against South Africa in Johannesburg where he claimed seven catches and a stumping. He would go on to also face England, India and West Indies during his career. His highest Test score of 48 came against West Indies at Sydney in 1969 in a match Australia won by 382 runs.
- In his domestic career, he played more than 100 games for New South Wales and is a member of the state's Hall of Fame. After finishing playing, he held various roles within the game, including NSW coach and selector and manager of the Australian Under-19 men's team. He was elected to the Cricket NSW Hall of Fame in 2021, and had a reputation as one of the nice guys of Australian cricket. A book about Taber's life was published in 2014, in which former Test captain Brian Booth called him a "wonderful team man".

Once 'most wanted hacker', Kevin Mitnick passes away at the age of 59

- Kevin Mitnick, who was once the FBI's most wanted cybercriminal passed away on July 16 at the age of 59. He took his last breath at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center on Sunday after fighting a 14-month-long battle with pancreatic cancer.
- Mitnick was a renowned hacker, and his introduction to the digital world began in 1979 when he was nearly 12 years old. In 1988, he faced legal consequences for his acts and was sentenced to a 12-month prison for software copying.
- But he didn't stop with the conviction, thereafter, he broke various systems, which include Pacific Bell's voicemail computers, during the 90s as a fugitive.

- Kevin Mitnick was the only child with a penchant for mischief, a defiant attitude towards authority and a love for magic, who grew up brilliant and relentless in the San Fernando Valley in California.

Former Kerala CM Oommen Chandy passes away

- Former Kerala Chief Minister and senior Congress leader Oommen Chandy 79, passed away in the early hours of Tuesday. Chandy, who was battling throat cancer, breathed his last at a private hospital in Bengaluru. Apart from his son, Kerala Congress President K. Sudhakaran shared the sad news in a tweet this morning. He was ill for a long time.
- The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the demise of former Chief Minister of Kerala, Shri Oommen Chandy. Modi also recalled his various interactions with him, particularly when they both served as Chief Ministers of their respective states.

Eminent mathematician Dr Mangala Narlikar passes away at 80

- Eminent mathematician and scientist Dr Mangala Narlikar, wife of noted astrophysicist Dr Jayant Narlikar, passed away at her residence in Maharashtra's Pune city on Monday after a prolonged illness, her family members said. She was 80. Narlikar had been battling cancer for the past few months,
- About: Dr Mangala Narlikar - Narlikar studied from the University of Bombay and received degrees of B. A. (Maths) in 1962 and M.A. (Maths) in 1964 with first rank and also won the Chancellor's gold medal. She married, Jayant Narlikar, a well known cosmologist and physicist, in 1966. They have three daughters, Geeta, Girija and Leelavati, all of whom have pursued careers in science; one (Geeta) is a Professor of Biochemistry at the University of California, San Francisco, and the other two are in computer science.

Veteran Marathi actor Ravindra Mahajani passes away

- Marathi actor Ravindra Mahajani has passed away at the age of 77, known for his notable contributions to Marathi cinema, had established himself as a respected actor and director. With a career spanning several decades, he had worked in numerous films and theater productions, leaving an indelible mark on the industry. His performances in movies like Mumbaicha Faujdar, Aram Haram Ahe, Zoonj, and Bolo He Chakradhari garnered critical acclaim and earned him a dedicated fan base. His son Gashmeer Mahajani is also an actor and best known for his work in Marathi cinema.
- Ravindra Mahajani (1946 – July 2023) was a Marathi actor and director. From the late seventies to the mid eighties, Mahajani featured in Marathi films. In his early career, Mahajani drove taxis and auditioned for films. He created Marathi films until 1987–1988. He was known as “the Vinod Khanna of the Marathi film industry” due to his personality and looks. Because of his resemblance to Vinod Khanna, director N. Chandra wanted him to star in his 1986 film Ankush.

- Mahajani declined. Mahajani featured in many romantic songs, including “Ha Sagar Kinara”, “Sumbaran Gao Deva”, and “Phite Andharache Jaale”. His film Devta is popular among rural fans. He is known for his roles in Duniya Kari Salam (1979), Mumbai cha Fauzdar (1984), Zoonj (1989), Kalat Nakalat (1990) and Aaram haram Ahe. The latter was a major hit while Laxmi Chi Pavale was a blockbuster. He made a comeback with 2015 film Kay Rao Tumhi.

Legendary artist, illustrator and sculptor Namboothiri passes away at 97

- The famous illustrator, sculptor and line sketch artist, KM Vasudevan Namboothiri, passed away at the age of 97. KM Vasudevan took his last breath at a private hospital in Kottakkal on Friday, where he was going through treatment for his age-related ailments.
- During his decades-long career, Namboothiri illustrated many popular characters for literary publications in the state. He has done some really popular literary works, which include characters of doyens of Malayalam literature like Jnanpith laureates M T Vasudevan Nair, Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai and S K Pottakkad and legends like Vaikom Muhammad Basheer.
- Namboothiri early life - Namboothiri was born in 1925 in Kerala's Ponnani. He entered the world of painting and sculpture in his childhood as he was influenced by a temple near his house. He was the disciple of prominent artist K C S Paniker and he was also inspired by renowned painters like Debi Prasad Roy Chowdhury and S Dhanapal.
- Namboothiri studied painting at the Madras School of Fine Arts.
- He also tried his hands at art direction and worked as an art director in a few films, such as Uttarayanam, which won him Kerala State Award for the best art director.
- In his long career of more than fifty years, he has done illustrations for almost all important literary works.

Major Bakhtawar Singh Brar, one of oldest Army veterans, passes away at 109

- Major Bakhtawar Singh Brar (retd), one of the oldest veterans of the Kumaon Regiment in the Indian Army, passed away on Monday in the US. He was 109. The news about Major Brar's death was tweeted by author Jai Samota and confirmed by Colonel NN Bhatia (retd), a veteran of the Kumaon Regiment who is well-versed in the history of the regiment
- Born in November 1913 in Faridkot district, Major Brar served in the Faridkot State Forces and then joined the 6 Kumaon Regiment, before retiring in 1963.
- In 1934, Major Brar joined the State Forces of Maharaja of Faridkot. He was awarded the Mention-in-Despatches by the King of England in 1942 for leading his company against the Pathans in Waziristan
- Major Brar was commissioned into the 6 Kumaon Regiment in 1945 and saw action in World War II in Burma. On November 8, 1957, he was tasked with snow clearance in the rescue operation in Baltal and was again awarded Mention-in-Despatches.

- In 1959, he led a contingent of 6 Kumaon at the Republic Day Parade. He also received the Chief of Army Staff 'Commendation Card' for his service in Jammu and Kashmir in 1960. In March 1960, he was posted to the 111 Infantry Battalion (TA).

Alan Arkin, Oscar-winning actor, passes away at 89

- Actor Alan Arkin, who won an Oscar award for his performance in "Little Miss Sunshine", has died at the age of 89, his sons have said in a statement. Alan Arkin was known for his wry wit and improvisation skills.
- Alan Arkin, born to Russian-German Jewish immigrant parents in Brooklyn on March 26, 1934, embarked on his acting journey at a tender age by enrolling in acting classes.
- His family relocated to Los Angeles in the 1950s, and Alan Arkin won scholarships to various Los Angeles drama colleges before dropping out to form a folk music band, The Tarriers, in 1955.
- The group had a hit with 1956's "The Banana Boat Song," and he continued to pursue a music career as well as acting for the next decade.
- Alan Arkin was also a member of Chicago's storied Second City improvisational troupe, and appeared on the big screen for the first time with The Tarriers in 1957's "Calypso Heat Wave."

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

Nisha Biswal becomes Deputy Chief Executive Officer of US finance agency

- Indian-American policy expert Nisha Biswal is confirmed by the Senate to serve as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of a US finance agency. Ms. Biswal will serve as the Deputy CEO of the United States International Development Finance Corporation. A White House press release said that US President Joe Biden announced his intent to nominate Nisha Desai Biswal earlier in March this year for the position of Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the United States International Development Finance Corporation. She has a high-profile career of over 30 years of experience in US foreign policy and international development programmes within the White House; US Congress and the private sector. Ms. Biswal currently holds the position of Senior Vice President for International Strategy and Global Initiatives at the US Chamber of Commerce, overseeing the US-India Business Council and US-Bangladesh Business Council.

Prof Ganesan Kannabiran takes charge as NAAC Director

- The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) recently announced the appointment of Prof Ganesan Kannabiran as its new director. The appointment took place on July 28, as per the official statement from NAAC. Prof Kannabiran brings with him a rich experience of over 30 years in the education sector, having served as a senior professor of Information Systems at the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Tiruchirappalli. Throughout his career, he

has held various leadership positions, including the Dean of Research and Consultancy, and Director-in-Charge at NIT Trichy and NIT Puducherry

- From 2018 to 2023, Prof Kannabiran served as the founding director of the Indian Institute of Information Technology, Andhra Pradesh. During his tenure, he played a pivotal role in implementing the National Education Policy at the institute and worked towards fostering community development by promoting engagement with neighboring villages.
- Prof Ganesan Kannabiran holds a Ph.D. in Information Systems and possesses three Master's degrees in Computer Science and Engineering, Business Administration, and Mathematics, demonstrating his multidisciplinary approach to education and research.

Cambodian PM Hun Sen to step down after four decades; hands over power to son

- Hun Sen has run kingdom since 1985, eliminating all opposition to his power, with parties banned, challengers forced to flee and freedom of expression stifled.
- Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, one of the world's longest-serving leaders, said on July 26, 2023 he will resign and hand power to his son, after almost four decades of hardline rule.
- The former Khmer Rouge cadre has run the kingdom since 1985, eliminating all opposition to his power, with opposition parties banned, challengers forced to flee and freedom of expression stifled.
- His Cambodian People's Party (CPP) won a landslide victory in an election on Sunday with no meaningful opposition, taking 82 percent of the vote, paving the way for a dynastic succession to his eldest son that some critics have compared to North Korea.

Bihar government appoints Ashwamedh Devi as Chairperson of State Women Commission

- Bihar government has appointed Ashwamedh Devi as the Chairperson of the State Women Commission. She is a former JD(U) MP from Samastipur parliamentary constituency. The state government has also appointed new members to the State Women Commission. Academician Professor Geeta Yadav, Prabhavathi Manjhi, Dr. Sujata Sumbrui, Rabia Khatoon, Sunita Kushwaha, Shweta Biswas & Sulochana Devi has been also appointed to the panel. The reconstitution of the State Women Commission was pending for a long time.

Tata Steel reappoints TV Narendran as MD and CEO for 5 years

- T V Narendran has been reappointed as the Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director of Tata Steel for a term of five years, starting from September 19, 2023, which will last until September 18, 2028. This decision was made based on the recommendation of the 'Nomination and Remuneration Committee'.
- As the CEO and MD of Tata Steel, Narendran is responsible for overseeing the company's both organic and inorganic growth. With a remarkable experience

spanning 34 years in the Mining and Metals industry, he has held various significant positions, including being on the Board of Tata Steel Limited, serving as Chairman of Tata Steel Europe and Tata Steel Long Products Ltd., and acting as Chairman of the Board of Governors of XLRI Jamshedpur.

- Narendran also holds the positions of Chairman at Tata Steel Europe, the Supervisory Board of Tata Steel Nederland BV, Tata Steel Long Products Limited, and Neelachal Ispat Nigam Limited.

China appoints Pan Gongsheng to lead central bank, succeeding Yi Gang

- Pan Gongsheng was named China's central bank governor in the widely anticipated final major appointment of the ruling Communist Party's once-a-decade change of power.
- Pan, a deputy central bank governor and veteran of China's state-owned banking industry, succeeds Yi Gang, an American-trained economist who held the post for five years. The endorsement of Pan's promotion by the ceremonial legislature, the National People's Congress, follows other Cabinet-level appointments announced in March.
- The governor of the People's Bank of China is the most prominent Chinese figure in finance circles but the post's powers are limited. The bank is controlled by the ruling Communist Party.

Wang Yi has been appointed as Foreign Minister of china

- China's foreign minister Qin Gang has been removed from his post and replaced by his predecessor Wang Yi, the country's legislature said on , In a sudden move that's likely to bring the focus back on the ruling Communist Party of China's (CPC) opaque politics.
- Qin, 57, has been replaced by Wang, who was China's foreign minister for a decade until December, 2022. Wang was promoted to the CPC's elite politburo last October when President Xi Jinping retained the general secretary's post for a norm-breaking third time. Wang was also appointed director of the CPC's foreign affairs commission.

UAE Minister for Foreign Trade Dr Thani Al Zeyoudi elected as chair of WTO's 13th Ministerial Conference

- UAE Minister for Foreign Trade Dr Thani Al Zeyoudi has been elected as the chair of the World Trade Organisation's 13th Ministerial Conference that will be held in Abu Dhabi in February 2024. The announcement was made during the WTO General Council in Geneva, where Dr Al Zeyoudi met with the WTO director general Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.
- The conference will be attended by representatives from the 164 countries and customs blocs that make up the WTO. It will review the performance of the trading system, make decisions on future work and set up the road map for the next conference, an official statement said on 24th July 2023.

Shah Rukh Khan appointed as the brand ambassador of ICC World Cup 2023

- The Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan has been appointed as the brand ambassador of ICC World Cup 2023. Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan launched the World Cup 2023 campaign 'It takes one day' in his iconic voiceover.
- The World Cup 2023 will be held in India from October 5 to November 19, 2023. India will start their world cup campaign against Australia on October 8 and the Rohit Sharma led side will take on Pakistan at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad on October 15.
- The schedule for the ICC World Cup 2023 Schedule has been released by ICC. The 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup will be held in India from October 5 to November 19, 2023. The upcoming World Cup will feature a total of 10 teams.
- India, as the host nation, has secured direct qualification, along with Afghanistan, Australia, England, Bangladesh, New Zealand, Pakistan, and South Africa. These teams earned their spots through their performance in the 2020-2023 ICC Cricket World Cup Super League. The remaining two teams will be determined through the ongoing World Cup Qualifiers taking place in Zimbabwe.

Admiral Lisa Franchetti becomes first woman to lead US Navy

- The nomination of Admiral Lisa Franchetti served as significant milestone in the history of US Navy, becomes first woman to serve as the Chief of Naval Operations and member of Joint Chiefs of Staffs.
- Franchetti, who is currently serving as the vice chief of naval operations, was commissioned in 1985 and has served as the commander of US Naval Forces Korea. She is the second woman ever to achieve the rank of four-star admiral in the United States Navy. In a statement on Friday, US President Joe Biden said Lisa Franchetti will bring dedicated service to the nation as a commissioned officer, including her current role of Vice Chief of Naval Operations.
- Franchetti studied at the North-western University's Medill School of Journalism in Evanston, Illinois. She was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree in journalism and earning developmental honors in history. She joined the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps Programme and was commissioned in 1985. She furthered her education at the Naval War College and obtained a master's degree in organizational management from the University of Phoenix.

Sat Pal Bhanoo has been appointed LIC MD

- The government has announced the appointment of Sat Pal Bhanoo as one of the managing directors of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC). He will take over as the LIC MD in place of Siddhartha Mohanty, who was appointed as the chairman of LIC in April.
- In the exchange filing, LIC said, "Shri Sat pal Bhanoo, Additional Zonal Manager (In-Charge) Zonal Office, LIC of India, Bhopal, has been appointed as Managing Director, LIC of India vice Shri Siddhartha Mohanty (presently serving as Chairperson) with effect from the date of assumption of charge of Office and

upto the date of his superannuation (i.e.31.12.2025), or until further orders, whichever is earlier."

Lokesh M appointed as CEO of Noida Authority

- Following orders issued by the Uttar Pradesh government on Wednesday, 2005-batch IAS officer Lokesh M has been appointed as new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Noida Authority.
- Former CEO Ritu Maheshwari has been transferred to Agra where she will take charge as Divisional Commissioner. A native of Karnataka, Lokesh M, had completed his training from Aligarh in 2006. He was District Magistrate and collector of Mainpuri, Kushinagar, Etah, Ghazipur, Amroha and Kaushambi districts from 2009 to 2016. He was on deputation to Karnataka from 2016 to 2021, after which he was made the Divisional Commissioner of Saharanpur before getting posted as Agra commissioner on May 31. Now as he has been given the responsibility of CEO of Noida Authority, official sources said that new CEO Lokesh M is likely to join Noida Authority on Friday.
- Meanwhile, Maheshwari, a 2003-batch officer of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), will join as Divisional Commissioner of Agra, replacing IAS officer Alok Gupta, who will be joining as the Divisional Commissioner of Kanpur. In July 2019, Maheshwari was made the CEO of Noida after her stint as the district magistrate of the adjoining Ghaziabad district.

Nivruti Rai, former Intel India head, joins Invest India as MD and CEO

- Former Intel India head Nivruti Rai has joined as the Managing Director and CEO of Invest India, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry informed on Wednesday. She has taken over the charge from Manmeet K Nanda, Joint Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) who had assumed this additional charge in March 2023.
- Rai is the recipient of the prestigious Nari Shakti Puraskar for her contributions to the field of technology. She spent 29 years at Intel as a global business and technology leader. She led Intel India as Country Head for the past seven years driving the growth and investment of Intel in India.
- During her tenure at Intel India, Rai contributed significantly towards indigenous technology development, start-up ecosystem, electronics manufacturing ecosystem, and policy formulation, especially in the areas of critical and emerging technologies,

Central government has appointed IPS Officer Manoj Yadava as DG Railway Protection Force

- Manoj Yadava, a senior IPS officer from the Haryana cadre, has been designated as the new Director General of the Railway Protection Force (RPF), according to an order from the Personnel Ministry. Yadava, who belongs to the 1988 batch of the Indian Police Service, will take over from Sanjay Chander, who is set to retire

on July 31. The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved Yadava's appointment as DG, RPF, until his retirement on July 31, 2025.

- Yadava, who was the Haryana DGP from 2019-21, is the senior most IPS officer in the cadre and is on central deputation at present as DG (investigations), National Human Rights Commission.
- **About: Railway Protection Force (RPF)** - Railway Protection Force (RPF) is an armed Force of the Union under the administrative and operational control of Indian Railways, Ministry of Railways, Government of India established by the Railway Protection Force Act, 1957; enacted by the Indian Parliament for "the better protection and security of railway property and passenger area". It has the power to search, arrest, Enquiry, and prosecute offenses committed under Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Act 1966, The Railways Act, 1989 (amended from time to time). However the power of arrests under other penal laws rests in the hands of the Government Railway Police (GRP) of state police.[4] The force is under the authority of the Indian Ministry of Railways.

SBI Capital Markets Ltd. (SBICAPS) has appointed Shri Rajay Kumar Sinha as its new MD and CEO

- SBI Capital Markets (SBICAPS) announced the appointment of Rajay Kumar Sinha as the Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of its wholly owned subsidiary and investment banking arm, effective July 14. Sinha takes over from Amitava Chatterjee, who will now serve as Deputy Managing Director in charge of Commercial Clients Group at SBI's Corporate Centre
- Previously, Sinha held the position of overseeing Treasury operations at SBI, where he managed the bank's investment portfolio, money market, equity, private equity, and forex operations. With his expertise in global markets, Sinha will contribute to the further strengthening of SBICAPS' investment banking business both in India and internationally.

Rakesh Pal appointed as DG Indian Coast Guard

- Rakesh Pal has been appointed as the 25th Director General (DG) of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG). He is an alumnus of the Indian Naval Academy and joined Indian Coast Guard in January 1989.
- According to the ministry of defence he has undergone professional specialisation in Gunnery and Weapons Systems at Indian Naval School Dronacharya, Kochi, and an Electro-Optics Fire Control Solution course from the United Kingdom.
- The Officer holds the recognition of being the First Gunner of ICG. Pal was conferred with Tatrakshak Medal in 2013 and President Tatrakshak Medal in 2018 for his illustrious service.
- The ministry of defence said that Rakesh Pal was elevated to the rank of Additional Director General in February 2022 and was posted at Coast Guard Headquarters, New Delhi.

- He was given the additional charge of Director General Coast Guard in February 2023. During the period, many significant operations and exercises were accomplished that includes the seizure of drugs and narcotic substances and gold worth crores of rupees.

Arvind Kumar appointed chairman of UPERC

- Arvind Kumar, advisor for industries to the Uttar Pradesh chief minister, has been appointed as the chairman of the Uttar Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (UPERC). After his retirement in February this year, Kumar was appointed as an advisor on industries to the Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath.
- Kumar, a 1988 batch IAS officer, earlier headed the state energy department and was also the chairman of UP Power Corporation Ltd (UPPCL) and the state's Infrastructure and Industrial Development Commissioner (IIDC). He was also instrumental in framing the state's industrial policy.
- The state government made the appointment after a three-member selection committee, headed by Justice (Retired) Umesh Kumar of Allahabad High Court, recommended two names from 33 shortlisted candidates and forwarded the same to the government.

Neeraj Akhoury elected as President and Parth Jindal as Vice President of CMA

- Neeraj Akhoury, Managing Director of Shree Cement, has been elected as the new President of Cement Manufacturers' Association (CMA).
- JSW Cement Managing Director Parth Jindal has been appointed as Vice President of CMA, the apex body of India's large cement manufacturers.
- Both were unanimously elected at the Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of CMA held on July 14, 2023, said a statement from the association.
- Akhoury, who has 30 years of experience in the steel and cement industries, takes over from UltraTech Cement's Managing Director K C Jhanwar.
- "As a future direction, the Indian Cement Industry would like to reiterate its commitment to being India's partner in nation-building for creating business value chains, supporting infrastructure growth and a sustainability agenda, with an emphasis on decarbonisation, aligned to India's priorities and working in close collaboration with policy planners, ministries and stakeholders," said Akhoury.
- The Cement Manufacturers' Association (CMA) is the apex body of large cement plants in India, representing almost 90% of the total installed cement capacity. CMA was established in 1946 with the objective of promoting the growth and development of the Indian cement industry. CMA represents almost 80 per cent of the total installed cement capacity in India.

President appoints two new judges in Supreme Court

- Telangana Chief Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Kerala Chief Justice S. Venkatanarayana Bhatti have been appointed as judges of the Supreme Court by the President.

These appointments were made shortly after the Supreme Court Collegium, headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, recommended their names to the government.

- Experience of Justice Mishra - Justice Bhatti was appointed as a judge of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh on April 12, 2013 and is the senior-most in his parent High Court.
- He was transferred to the Kerala High Court in March 2019 and is presently serving as Chief Justice there since June 1, 2023.
- Experience of Justice Viswanathan - Justice Bhuyan is currently serving as the Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court while Justice Bhatti is the Chief Justice of Kerala High Court.
- Justice Bhuyan's parent High Court is the Gauhati High Court.
- He was appointed as a judge of the Gauhati High Court on October 17, 2011.
- He is the senior-most judge of his parent High Court and has been serving as Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court since June 28, 2022.

SBI Card appoints Abhijit Chakravorty as MD & CEO

- SBI Cards & Payment Services (SBI Card), the country's largest pure-play credit card issuer, has appointed Abhijit Chakravorty as MD & CEO.
- Chakravorty, who is presently a Deputy Managing Director at SBI, will assume charge of his new role on August 12, SBI Card said in a filing with stock exchanges.
- He has been appointed as SBI Card's MD&CEO for two years.
- Incumbent MD & CEO Rama Mohan Rao Amara has tendered his resignation owing to his transfer to SBI. Amara will demit office on August 11.
- Chakravorty will assume his new role at a time when the Indian credit card industry is showing robust growth both in terms of volumes and card spends.
- Chakravorty, who started his banking career as a Probationary Officer with SBI in 1988, has gained over 34 years of rich experience in Retail and Corporate Banking, Overseas Operations and IT verticals of the bank.
- He also served at the Hongkong branch of the Bank. He had a long tenure in Commercial Credit Group and was involved in high value Corporate Lending.
- Chakravorty managed the Bangladesh Operations of SBI as CEO and Country Head.

ITC board reappoints Sanjiv Puri as chairman & managing director

- In a significant development, the board of ITC Ltd has re-appointed Sanjiv Puri as the company's Chairman and Managing Director for a period of five years. The decision, made on the recommendation of the committee, is set to take effect from July 22, 2024. ITC Limited is an eminent Indian conglomerate, which holds a prominent position among the largest companies in the country. Its operations encompass a diverse range of business sectors, such as tobacco manufacturing, food processing, retailing, and financial services.

- Sanjiv Puri, 60, joined ITC in January 1986 and has since demonstrated exceptional leadership across various roles within the organization. He was appointed as the Chief Executive Officer in February 2017 and later re-designated as the Managing Director in May 2018. Puri took on the role of Chairman of the tobacco-to-hotels conglomerate on May 13, 2019.
- During his tenure at ITC, Puri has held several key positions, displaying a remarkable understanding of diverse business verticals. He has overseen critical areas such as manufacturing, operations, and information & digital technology. Puri's expertise and strategic vision have played a pivotal role in shaping ITC's growth trajectory.

K. Rajaraman appointed as new chairperson of IFSCA

- The government has announced the appointment of senior bureaucrat and telecom secretary K Rajaraman as the next Chairperson of the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA), showed an official order.
- Rajaraman is an Indian Administrative Service officer of 1989 batch. His appointment is for a period of three years. He succeeds the first IFSCA Chairperson Injeti Srinivas who led the authority since 2020.
- Rajaraman's term will be for three years from the date of his assumption of charge of the post, or till attaining the age of 65 years, or until further orders, whichever is the earliest, the order issued by the finance ministry said.
- About: IFSCA - IFSCA was set up in April 2020 under the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019, at GIFT City, Gandhinagar in Gujarat. IFSCA is a unified authority for the development and regulation of financial products, financial services and financial institutions in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). At present, the GIFT IFSC is the maiden international financial services centre in India. Prior to the establishment of IFSCA, RBI, SEBI, PFRDA and IRDAI regulated the business in IFSC.

Telecom Secretary K Rajaraman to take charge as IFSCA chairman

- The government has appointed Telecom Secretary K Rajaraman as the new chairperson of the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA). Injeti Srinivas, the first chairperson of the regulatory authority appointed in 2020, will be succeeded by Rajaraman.
- According to a gazette notification, Rajaraman's appointment will be effective for a period of three years from the date he assumes charge, or until he reaches the age of 65, or until further orders, whichever occurs earliest. The IFSCA was established in April 2020 under the International Financial Services Centres Authority Act, 2019. It is headquartered at GIFT City, Gandhinagar.
- The IFSCA serves as a unified authority for developing and regulating financial products, financial services, and financial institutions within the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in India. Currently, GIFT IFSC is India's first international financial services cent.

C-DOT CEO Rajkumar Upadhyay Receives 2-Year Extension

- Rajkumar Upadhyay, the CEO of C-DOT (Centre for Development of Telematics), has been granted a two-year extension to his tenure. This decision aims to provide continuity and stability to C-DOT, an organization dedicated to driving innovation and research in the field of telecommunications. Under Upadhyay's leadership, C-DOT has made significant contributions to the development of telecom infrastructure and solutions in India.
- In October 2020, Upadhyay joined India's telecom technology research organisation C-DoT as the executive director. Last December, he was promoted to the newly-created rank of the CEO, and had become C-DoT's board chairman

RBI appoints P. Vasudevan as new executive director

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Thursday appointed P. Vasudevan as executive director. His appointment is effective from July 03, 2023.
- The Reserve Bank in a statement said Vasudevan will look after Department of Currency Management, Corporate Strategy and Budget Department (Areas other than that of Budget & Funds) and Enforcement Department.
- Prior to being promoted as executive director, Vasudevan was the Chief General Manager-in-charge of the Department of Payment and Settlement Systems.
- The apex bank said Vasudevan has, over a span of nearly 30 years in the Reserve Bank, served in supervision of banks and non-banking financial companies, payment and settlement systems and other areas in the Reserve Bank, including a stint as Member of Faculty in Bankers' Training College.

Sirisha Voruganti appointed MD & CEO of Lloyds Banking Group's Technology Center in India

- Lloyds Banking Group, one of the leading UK-based financial services groups, has appointed Sirisha Voruganti as Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of its new Lloyds Technology Centre.
- Voruganti is a globally renowned technology and innovation leader. She previously served as the Managing Director and Board Member of JCPenney in India. Voruganti has held senior technology positions at leading global firms, including serving as JPMorgan Chase's first female managing director in technology in India and as executive vice president of architecture, data and shared services for Mastercard.
- About: Lloyds Banking Group - Lloyds Banking Group is a British financial institution formed in 2009 through the acquisition of HBOS by Lloyds TSB. It is one of the UK's largest financial services organisations, serving 30 million customers and employing 65,000 people. Lloyds Bank was founded in 1765, and the legacy of the wider group stretches back 320 years.
- The group is listed on the London Stock Exchange (LSE) and is a constituent of the FTSE 100 Index. It has a market capitalization of approximately £30.65 billion as of August 1, 2022. The headquarters of Lloyds Banking Group is located in

Edinburgh, United Kingdom. Robin Budenberg is the chairman of Lloyds Banking Group.

Justice Sheo Kumar Singh becomes NGT acting chairman

- The Central Government has authorized Justice Sheo Kumar Singh-I, Judicial Member of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), to act as the Chairperson of the Tribunal till a new Chairperson is appointed.
- Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel who was appointed as the Chairman in July 2018; Retired on 6 July 2023. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change issued a notification on 6 July 2023 authorizing Justice Sheo Kumar Singh-I to act as the Chairperson.
- He was appointed as a judicial member of NGT in 2020. He is currently working as Judicial Member in the Central Zone Bench of Bhopal.
- Shri Singh-I graduated from Allahabad University in 1975. Passed out as a Law graduate from Allahabad University in the year 1978. Joined judicial service in 1984 and worked as District Judge, Registrar (Judicial) in various districts of Uttar Pradesh. He was appointed Supervisor of Ram Janmabhoomi, Ayodhya, Faizabad. He was elevated as a judge in Allahabad and served there till January 2018.

FPSB India appoints Krishna Mishra as CEO

- The Financial Planning Standards Board (FPSB) of India appointed Krishna Mishra as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with effect from 1 August 2023. FPSB India is the Indian subsidiary of FPSB, a global standard-setting organization for the financial planning profession.
- Krishna Mishra will lead the strategy and operations of FPSB India as CEO. His primary focus will be on advancing the financial planning profession in India. Krishna Mishra brings over 20 years of experience to his new role.
- His previous leadership positions include Country Head-International Business (India and South Asia) at Becker Professional Education, Head of North and East India at the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, and Regional Head (East) and Business Head-Channel Business at HCL Infosystem
- About: Financial Planning Standards Board (FPSB) - It is a global non-profit organisation that sets and supports standards for the financial planning profession. Its primary mission is to benefit the global public by establishing, promoting and implementing professional standards for financial planning.
- The FPSB develops and maintains the Certified Financial Planner (CFP) certification program, which is recognized as the global standard for financial planning excellence. The FPSB aims to increase consumer confidence in the financial planning profession by establishing and maintaining global standards.
- It aims to protect the public interest and promote professionalism, integrity and competence among financial planners globally. Please Rate this article, so that we can improve the quality for you.

NATO extends Jens Stoltenberg's tenure as chief of alliance by a year

- NATO's members, after struggling to find a replacement for the alliance head, extended Jens Stoltenberg's tenure for one more year.
- the announcement was made a week ahead of a summit of NATO leaders in Vilnius, Lithuania that will be mostly focusing on the Western military alliance's response to the conflict and Kyiv's push for membership.
- The 31 NATO countries decided to extend Stoltenberg's term after failing to agree on a replacement.
- The former prime minister of Norway, Stoltenberg has been the alliance's boss since 2014 and his tenure has already been extended thrice previously.
- He is widely seen as a steady leader and a patient consensus-builder across the alliance. He also won widespread appreciation for guiding the alliance throughout former US President Donald Trump's presidency who openly conjectured about taking the US out of NATO.

Lt Gen MU Nair takes over as India's top cyber security chief

- Lt Gen MU Nair has been appointed the new National Cyber Security Coordinator (NCSC) replacing Lt Gen (retd.) Dr Rajesh Pant on Monday. Lt Gen Nair previously held the chair of Signal-officer-in-Chief at the Army Headquarters.
- About: Lt Gen MU Nair - Lt Gen MU Nair, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, Sena Medal, is appointed as the head of the National Cyber Coordination Centre (NCCC).
- He is India's third cyber security chief after Lt Gen (retd.) Dr Rajesh Pant and first chief Gulshan Rai.
- Lt Gen MU Nair is an alumnus of the prestigious National Defence Academy.
- He has also held other important positions including the additional director general, signal intelligence, chief of staff of a corps and command.
- Nair has rich expertise in cyber warfare, signal intelligence and communication & information technology at the domestic and global levels.

PM Prasad takes over as Coal India chairman

- Coal India's (CIL) newly-appointed chairman and managing director (CMD) PM Prasad on Saturday, while assuming charge, said that uninterrupted coal supply to the power sector is among the top priorities of the public sector coal mining major,
- Prior to taking charge as Coal India CMD, he led the Jharkhand based Central Coalfields Ltd, a Coal India, subsidiary, to its production target achievement in FY23.

Centre re-appoints Tushar Mehta as Solicitor General of India

- The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet on Friday re-appointed Tushar Mehta as the Solicitor-General of India.
- Besides Mehta, six Additional Solicitor Generals of India – namely, Vikramjit Banerjee, K.M Nataraj, Balbir Singh, S.V Raju, N. Venkataraman, and Aishwariya Bhati – were re-appointed.

- The term for all the law officers is that of three years, or until further notice, whichever should be earlier.
- About: Tushar Mehta - Tushar Mehta is a senior counsel in India and is currently serving as the Solicitor General of India. Mehta attended the Gujarat University, where he obtained his law degree and received five gold medals. He has also received honorary doctorates from Amity University, Noida and Karnataka State Law University.

SBI appoints Kameshwar Rao Kodavanti as CFO

- State Bank of India (SBI) has appointed Kameshwar Rao Kodavanti as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) with effect from July 1, 2023.
- Rao, who is a Chartered Accountant (CA), has been working with the Bank since August 1991, SBI said in a regulatory filing.
- Kodavanti brings a wealth of experience to his new role at State Bank of India. Having served the bank for over three decades, he possesses expertise in various domains, including banking, forex, finance, and accounting. His long-standing association with the bank has equipped him with valuable insights into the industry and the institution's operations. Additionally, Kodavanti is a qualified chartered accountant, further bolstering his financial acumen.
- He has vast experience in Banking, Forex and Finance, and Accounting, it added.

Centre reappoints Tushar Mehta as Solicitor General of India for 3 more years

- Senior advocate and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta has been reappointed as the Solicitor General of India for a further period of three years along with his team of six additional solicitor generals (ASG) in the Supreme Court.
- The decision was taken by the Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) as Mehta's term along with that of other law officers in the top court came to an end on Friday. Mehta has been continuing as SG since October 2018.
- The order of ACC approving the re-appointment has extended the term of SG for a period of three years or until further orders. The six other law officers serving as ASGs in Supreme Court who have got extensions include Vikramjeet Banerjee, KM Nataraj, Balbir Singh, Suryaprakash V Raju, N Venkatraman and Aishwarya Bhati. No orders have been issued yet for re-appointing three ASGs – Madhavi Divan, Sanjay Jain and Jayant K Sud whose term will come to an end on Friday.

Ajit Pawar sworn in as the new Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra

- NCP leader Ajit Pawar took oath as the Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra. He joined the Eknath Shinde-led Maharashtra government to take up this role.
- Ajit Pawar is the son of Sharad Pawar's elder brother Anantrao. He began his political career in 1982 when he was elected to the board of a sugar cooperative.
- About: Ajit Pawar - Ajit Anantrao Pawar is an Indian politician from Nationalist Congress Party who is serving as the 9th Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra with Devendra Fadnavis since 2023, previously, from 2019 to 2022, 2019 to 2019, 2012 to 2014 and 2010 to 2012.

Vice Admiral Atul Anand takes over as Additional Secretary, DMA

- Vice Admiral Atul Anand took over as Additional Secretary, Department of Military Affairs on July 03, 2023. The post was previously held by Lt Gen Anil Puri, who superannuated on February 28, 2023.
- Vice Admiral Atul Anand was commissioned into the executive branch of the Indian Navy on January 01, 1988. He is an alumnus of National Defence Academy (71st Course, Delta Squadron); Defence Services Command and Staff College, Mirpur (Bangladesh) and National Defence College, New Delhi. He has also attended the Advanced Security Cooperation course at Asia Pacific Centre of Security Studies, Hawaii, USA.
- Vice Admiral Atul Anand has held several key appointments in his career, including the command of Torpedo Recovery Vessel INTRV A72; missile boat INS Chatak; corvette INS Khukri and the destroyer INS Mumbai. He also served as the Navigating Officer of IN ships Sharda, Ranvijay & Jyoti and was the Direction Officer of the Sea Harrier squadron INAS 300 and the Executive Officer of the destroyer INS Delhi. His important staff appointments include Joint Director, Staff Requirements; Directing Staff at Defence Services Staff College, Wellington; Director, Naval Operations and Director, Naval Intelligence (Ops).
- He has also served as Principal Director, Naval Operations and Principal Director, Strategy, Concepts and Transformation at Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (Navy). As a Flag Officer, he has served as Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Foreign, Cooperation and Intelligence); Deputy Commandant & Chief Instructor at National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla; Flag Officer Commanding Maharashtra Naval area; Flag Officer Commanding Karnataka Naval area and Director General Naval Operations.

UN chief appoints Xu Haoliang of China as deputy head of UNDP

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has announced the appointment of Xu Haoliang from China as the new Undersecretary-General and Associate Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP).
- Xu will succeed Usha Rao-Monari of India, to whom the Secretary-General has expressed his appreciation for her service and commitment during her tenure as Associate Administrator.
- Xu has been serving as the UN Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support at the UNDP since 2019.
- Prior to that, from 2013 to 2019, he held the position of UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific.
- Before joining the United Nations, Xu worked in the field of civil engineering in China and the United States.
- The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the leading agency of the United Nations.

Anurag Verma assumes charge as Punjab chief secretary

- IAS officer Anurag Verma took charge as the Punjab chief secretary on Saturday. Verma, a 1993-batch IAS officer, along with other IAS officers, including Malwinder Singh Jaggi, Kumar Rahul and Sonali Giri, were present at the Punjab Civil Secretariat when Verma took charge.
- Verma previously held the charge of additional chief secretary, home affairs and justice, along with some other additional charges. The IAS officer, who belongs to Patiala, has earlier served as the deputy commissioner of Bathinda, Ludhiana and Jalandhar districts.
- Interacting with the media after assuming office, Verma said his foremost priority would be to successfully implement pro-people policies of the elected government with a motive of benefiting those who deserve it.
- "As this government has successfully delivered on health, education and war against corruption, through my administrative secretaries, my effort would be to work with more vigour to take further these schemes, succeeded Vijay Kumar Janjua, who retired on June 30.

Gernot Dollner succeeds Markus Duesmann as Chairman and CEO of Audi

- German luxury car brand Audi has announced that Gernot Dollner will take over from Markus Duesmann as Chairman of the Board of Management, effective September 1, 2023.
- Manfred Doss, Chairman of Audi's Supervisory Board said, "I would like to thank Markus Duesmann for all the important work he has done during his tenure at Audi. He has brought great foresight and vision to planning and driving forward key strategic decisions, including, first and foremost, the electrification strategy. Audi will be able to build further on these cornerstones in the future
- Dollner holds a degree in mechanical engineering. He joined Volkswagen as a Ph.D. candidate in 1993 and subsequently served in a number of management roles at Porsche, including as head of Concept Development and head of the Panamera Series. Since 2021, he has overseen the Volkswagen Group's Product and Group Strategy and the General Secretariat.

TS Singh Deo appointed as Chhattisgarh's deputy chief minister

- Chhattisgarh minister TS Singh Deo will be the deputy chief minister with the ruling Congress on Wednesday clearing his appointment months ahead of the assembly elections.
- According to a party statement issued here, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has approved the proposal for the appointment of Singh Deo as the deputy chief minister in Chhattisgarh.
- About: TS Singh Deo - Tribhuvaneshwar Saran Singh Deo or T. S. Singh Deo is an Indian politician from Ambikapur, Chhattisgarh, India. He is current and 1st Deputy Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh. He is also the current titular Maharaja of

Surguja, with headquarters at Ambikapur. He was the last mentor to sit on the throne of Surguja.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Ranger Day

- World Ranger Day, celebrated on July 31, serves as a special occasion to pay tribute and show gratitude to the courageous men and women who devote their lives to safeguarding wildlife and preserving our precious natural resources. These unsung heroes selflessly work day and night, striving to protect some of the most fragile ecosystems and endangered species on our planet. Their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to the cause of conservation deserve our utmost respect and admiration.
- History - The origins of World Ranger Day can be traced back to the International Ranger Federation (IRF), an organisation established in 1992 to promote and support the work of park rangers worldwide. The day was first observed in 2007 in memory of eight rangers who tragically lost their lives while on duty in Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo. Since then, World Ranger Day has grown to become an internationally recognised occasion to celebrate rangers' contributions and raise awareness about the challenges they face in their line of duty.
- Theme - The theme of World Ranger Day 2023 is "30 by 30," building on the momentum from the 2022 United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15). During COP15, world leaders and decision-makers agreed upon a Global Biodiversity Framework, aiming to effectively conserve and manage at least 30 percent of the planet's areas by 2030 (also known as the '30 by 30' target). This ambitious goal highlights the urgent need for increased conservation efforts to safeguard ecosystems and protect the planet's biodiversity.

World Day against Trafficking in Persons

- World Day Against Trafficking in Persons is observed on July 30 every year to raise awareness about the trends in human trafficking identified by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). It also aims to put pressure on governments, law enforcement agencies and civil society to strengthen the prevention of trafficking and the identification and support of victims.
- History - World Day Against Trafficking in Persons was adopted at a high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly through Resolution A/RES/68/192. The resolution reaffirms the commitment of the United Nations to end trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and states that trafficking in persons is a serious threat to "human dignity and physical integrity, human rights and development".
- Theme - The theme of World Day against Trafficking in Persons 2023 is "Reach every victim of trafficking, leave no one behind". As per UNODC, the meaning of leaving people behind is failing to end the exploitation of trafficking victims,

failing to support victim-survivors once they are free from their traffickers, and leaving identifiable groups vulnerable to traffickers.

International day pf Friendship

- International day of Friendship is a special occasion dedicated to celebrating the cherished bond of friendships that enrich our lives. On July 30, people worldwide come together to honour and appreciate the significance of these eternal connections. In India, Friendship Day is traditionally observed on the first Sunday of August.
- **History** - The International Day of Friendship was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in 2011. The United Nations officially declared July 30 as International Friendship Day, and it has been celebrated with enthusiasm in many countries ever since. The day highlights the power of friendship in promoting peace, understanding, and unity among people and communities worldwide.
- **Theme** - The theme for International Friendship Day 2023 is "Sharing the human spirit through friendship," continuing the focus on fostering meaningful connections and camaraderie among individuals.
- Through strong bonds of camaraderie and trust, friendship plays a significant role in achieving lasting stability and creating a safety net that benefits all. It fosters a passion for a better world where individuals come together for the greater good. In the face of various challenges and divisions, friendship serves as a vital tool for addressing root causes and building a shared spirit of human solidarity.

International Tiger Day

- International Tiger Day is observed globally on July 29 every year, International Tiger Day is celebrated to raise awareness about one of the most majestic and endangered creatures on our planet: the tiger. This day provides a platform for people all around the world to emphasise the value of tiger conservation and the immediate need to save these majestic big cats from extinction.
- Since they represent strength, elegance, and beauty, tigers have attracted the attention of people for millennia. They have a particular place in our hearts and ecosystems and are revered in many cultures and mythology. However, a number of reasons seriously jeopardise their continued survival. The occasion of International Tiger Day offers us a chance to unite as a global society and consider the importance of protecting these iconic animals and their natural habitats.
- **History** - Global Tiger Day, commonly referred to as International Tiger Day, was first established in 2010 during the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit by nations that are home to tigers. The Global Tiger Initiative (GTI), a grouping of nations, international organisations, and conservation organisations committed to tiger conservation, organised the summit, which took place in St. Petersburg, Russia. The Tiger Range Countries (TRCs), or nations with wild tiger populations, gathered during this summit to discuss the worrying global drop in tiger

numbers. The 29th of July was chosen as International Tiger Day because it represents the halfway point between the first and last days of the Saint Petersburg Tiger Summit and the ongoing international campaign to rescue tigers.

World Hepatitis Day

- Every year on July 28th, the world observes World Hepatitis Day to raise global awareness about hepatitis. The main objective of this awareness drive is to address the concerning statistics, which indicate that someone dies from hepatitis or related conditions every 30 seconds worldwide. Therefore, it is crucial to have precise information about the disease and take necessary actions. The campaigns and activities conducted on World Hepatitis Day 2023 aim to educate people about the disease and its various aspects.
- World Hepatitis Day is observed each year on 28 July to raise awareness on viral hepatitis, and this year's theme is 'one life, one liver'. Each year, this day focuses on a specific theme to increase knowledge about the current situation of hepatitis worldwide and bring about positive changes. Various events such as campaigns, seminars, and lectures are organized, inviting people from all over the world to participate and learn more about the disease.
- About: Hepatitis - Hepatitis virus has five commonly known strains: Type A, B, C, D and E. All of them affect the liver but there are some key differences in origin, transmission and severity of the disease. Hepatitis can be preventable with immunization and manageable, but there is no cure at present.

World Conservation Day / World Nature Conservation Day

- World Conservation Day or World Nature Conservation Day is observed globally on 28 July every year. The day aims to raise awareness about the importance of conserving nature and biodiversity. It emphasizes that a healthy environment is important for a stable and healthy society.
- World Nature Conservation Day promotes the idea that a healthy environment is the foundation of a prosperous mankind. The day serves as an opportunity to create positive opinions and attitudes towards climate change.
- The theme for World Nature Conservation Day 2023 is "Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet." This theme highlights the vital role of forests in supporting both human livelihoods and the overall well-being of the planet.
- **History** - The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) was established in 1948 to address environmental concerns caused by industrialization and human activities. During the 1960s and 1970s, the IUCN shifted its focus to species and habitat conservation in response to the destruction of ecosystems.
- The IUCN Red List for Threatened Species was created to assess the conservation status of various species, indicating their vulnerability to extinction.
- In 2000, the IUCN introduced nature-based solutions, which use ecosystems and biodiversity to address climate change, food security and poverty alleviation.

- World Nature Conservation Day is observed annually on 28 July to raise awareness about the importance of nature conservation and sustainable practices.

Kargil Vijay Diwas

- Kargil Vijay Divas or Kargil Diwas is observed every year on 26 July to honour India's victory over Pakistan in the Kargil War in 1999. As part of "Operation Vijay," the Indian Army drove out intruders from Pakistan during this conflict and reclaimed Tiger Hill and other outposts. At Kargil in Ladakh, the conflict lasted for more than 60 days.
- Kargil Vijay Divas is commemorated annually in honour of the many Indian troops who lost their lives in battle. Every year, on the occasion of Kargil Vijay Divas, the Prime Minister of India pays tribute to the brave soldiers who lost their precious lives in the Kargil war, at Amar Jawan located near the India Gate, New Delhi.

International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem

- The International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem is observed annually on July 26th. Its purpose is to increase global understanding of the significance of mangrove ecosystems as distinct, precious, and delicate environments. The day also seeks to advocate for sustainable practices in managing, safeguarding, and utilizing these ecosystems. The General Conference of UNESCO officially adopted this International Day in 2015.
- The International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem, observed on July 26th, was established by UNESCO during their General Conference in 2015 to create awareness about the critical value of mangrove ecosystems. The main objective of this day is to promote the preservation and sustainable development of mangrove forests.
- Mangrove forests hold significant ecological importance as their intricate root systems serve as protective nurseries for various organisms, shielding them from predators, extreme heat, and powerful tides. Additionally, these coastal forests are highly effective in removing five times more carbon dioxide from the atmosphere compared to terrestrial forests.

World Drowning Prevention Day

- Swimming is a great low-impact exercise that builds endurance, muscle strength and cardiovascular fitness. But it's more than just a sport—it is a vital life saving skill,
- World Drowning Prevention Day is marked each year on July 25 with the objective of increasing awareness about the devastating and enduring consequences of drowning on families and communities, as well as educating people about crucial methods to prevent such incidents.
- Approximately 236,000 individuals lose their lives to drowning annually, with children between the ages of five and 14 being more susceptible to this tragedy.

Research indicates that youngsters and teenagers living in rural areas are at a higher risk of drowning compared to their urban counterparts.

- History - World Drowning Prevention Day was established through the U.N. General Assembly Resolution A/RES/75/273 in April 2021, aiming to address global drowning prevention. Drowning, a form of suffocation resulting from the mouth and nose being submerged in water, often occurs in isolation or situations where others are unaware or unable to assist the victim.

Income Tax Day

- The Income Tax department observes July 24 every year as Income Tax Day or 'Aaykar Diwas', to commemorate the introduction of provision of income tax in the country. On the same day in the year 1860, Income tax was originally introduced in India by Sir James Wilson, to compensate for the losses incurred during the first war of independence. This is the 163rd anniversary of Income Tax Day.
- On Income Tax Day, the CBDT organizes various events and activities to raise awareness about income tax and its importance. These events include seminars, workshops, and outreach programs. The CBDT also releases a commemorative postage stamp on Income Tax Day. Income Tax Day is an important day for the Indian government and for taxpayers. It is a day to celebrate the importance of income tax and to reaffirm our commitment to paying our taxes honestly and on time.
- This year, the Income Tax department surpassed its previous year milestone target of filing 3 crore ITRs, days before the deadline. This year, the target in income tax return (ITR) filling reached 7 days earlier in the year.
- On the occasion of 164th Income Tax Day celebrations, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will join the celebration at Plenary Hall, Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

Parents' Day

- Parent Day or National Parents' Day, is observed annually on the fourth Sunday of July, to pay tribute to parents and their selfless sacrifices. This year, we'll celebrate and honor parents on July 23.
- History - The roots of National Parents' Day can be traced back to 1994 when President Bill Clinton officially established it by signing a Congressional resolution. This special day is observed on the fourth Sunday of July each year and is dedicated to celebrating parents and their crucial role in our lives. Over the years, the annual festivities have grown to include parades, speeches, awards ceremonies, and various special events, all aimed at honoring and cherishing the indispensable contributions parents make to our well-being and development.
- The National Parents' Day is of great significance as it is an annual celebration dedicated to honouring and appreciating parents for their selfless love, sacrifices and guidance in shaping the lives of their children.

World Brain Day

- World Brain Day is celebrated globally on July 22nd every year. The day promotes education, research, and support for individuals affected by brain-related conditions.
- History - The World Federation of Neurology (WFN) was founded on July 22, 1957. The Public Awareness and Advocacy Committee put up a suggestion that led to the creation of "World Brain Day" on July 22. This suggestion was presented during the World Congress of Neurology (WCN) Council of participants meeting on September 22, 2013, and the participants heartily welcomed it. Following this enthusiastic response, the Board of Trustees gave the idea its blessing at their meeting in February 2014, making it an annual celebration that would take place on the same day every year.
- Theme - World Brain Day's 2023 theme is "Brain Health and Disability: Leave No One Behind." This international movement strives to close the information gap and increase public awareness of impairments to brain health. In addition to promoting better healthcare, education, and research about neurological illnesses, it emphasises the significance of delivering high-quality healthcare to those with disabilities. The major objective is to make sure that no one is forgotten or left out and that everyone gets the help and consideration they require to keep their brains functioning at their best.

Pi Approximation Day

- Pi approximation Day is observed every year on 22 July. The day is observed to value and showcase the importance of mathematical constant π (pi).
- Pi is defined as the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter and in mathematics its value is approximately equal to 3.14159. Pi is used for calculations in both mathematics and physics.
- On the occasion of Pi approximation Day, people frequently participate in a variety of pi-related activities such as reciting the pi digits, participating in competitions or quizzes with a pi theme, baking pies (both real pies and math-themed pies), discussing interesting pi tidbits, and many more.
- History - The symbol of Pi was designed back in 1706 by mathematician Leonhard Euler. Pi Approximation Day, besides being celebrated on July 22, is also celebrated on November 10, as it is the 314th day of the year. Pi Day is also observed on March 14, as it looks like 3/14 when placed in the month/date format.

National Mango Day

- National Mango Day is annually observed on July 22, National Mango Day is a time for celebration and appreciation of mangoes, a tasty and wholesome tropical fruit. This special day allows us to enjoy the delicious flavour, plethora of benefits, and astounding health advantages that mangoes provide. Mango is recognised as one of the most beloved fruits globally and has a special place in Indian history. Ice cream, mousse, smoothies, and a variety of other delicacies

are just a few of the mouthwatering ways you may enjoy this unique flavour. People all throughout the world love the fruit, which is quite popular. Don't forget to mark your calendar for National Mango Day if you're a lover of this delicious fruit and savour

- History - The roots of the International Mango Festival can be traced back to 1987 when the National Horticulture Board of India had a bright idea—to celebrate mango. Since then, it has become an annual tradition, eagerly awaited by mango lovers across the nation. Bustling mango markets, vibrant mango exhibitions, and an abundance of fruity delights await visitors during this mango-filled extravaganza.

International Chess Day / World Chess Day

- International Chess Day / World Chess Day is celebrated on July 20 every year with the aim to raise awareness about the game of chess and appreciate chess players across the world. Chess is known as the "game of kings" and is popular for its intellectual depth. This day celebrates the ancient game of etiquette and sportsmanship. There is no doubt that chess is a game with a global impact and the game as an intellectual and strategic tool is essential for intellectual development.
- History - UNESCO established International Chess Day with the aim to honor the founding of the International Chess Federation, FIDE by its French abbreviation in the year 1996. The headquarters of FIDE were established in Paris, France, and are now located in Switzerland. FIDE is an international organization that brings together different chess federations throughout the world and serves as the overseer of international chess tournaments. The International Olympic Committee acknowledged FIDE in 1999.

Nelson Mandela International Day

- Nelson Mandela International Day is observed annually on July 18, in commemoration of Nelson Mandela's birthday, to honour his life and legacy. It holds immense significance as it serves as a global call to action for individuals to engage in acts of community service and social activism.
- History - The United Nations officially designated July 18 as Nelson Mandela International Day in November 2009, with the first observance taking place in 2010, reported BQ Prime. The initiative was inspired by Mandela's powerful message in 2008, where he urged the younger generation to take up the responsibility of leading the fight against global social injustices, stating, "it is in your hands now."
- Nelson Mandela was a renowned South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader, and philanthropist, who believed in the power of empathy and forgiveness to bring about transformative change.

World Day for International Justice

- Every year, World Day for International Justice is celebrated on July 17 to respect the significant role played by The International Criminal Court and other organisations in serving justice to people who have been victims of a lot of crimes.
- History - According to The International Criminal Court - "July 17 is the Day of International Criminal Justice. It marks the anniversary of the adoption of the Rome Statute on 17 July 1998, the founding treaty of the ICC, which seeks to protect people from genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and the crime of aggression. July 17 unites all those who wish to support justice, promote victims' rights, and help prevent crimes that threaten the peace, security and well-being of the world."
- The day is celebrated to create more public awareness about the mandate and the importance of justice in serious crimes. It also helps in creating awareness about the people who have been denied justice for long, due to several crimes, such as genocide and terrorism. It helps in understanding the importance of fighting for justice, advancing human rights and accelerating the prosecution of crimes.

Indian Council of Agricultural Research 95th Foundation and Technology Day

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) celebrated its 95th Foundation Day today 17 July at National Agriculture Science Complex, Pusa, New Delhi.
- Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and President of ICAR Society was the Chief Guest of the program. Shri Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister for Fisheries, Animal Husbandry - Dairying and Shri Kailash Choudhary, Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare also graced the occasion.
- Shri Rupala acclaimed ICAR for several remarkable achievements which have revolutionized the dairy and fisheries sector. He further mentioned that the time has come to earn carbon credits from agriculture which can be explored for additional income. He also inaugurated an exhibition showcasing innovative technologies developed by 113 ICAR research institute.

World Youth Skills Day

- World Youth Skills Day is celebrated every year on July 15. Started in 2014, World Youth Skills Day seeks to celebrate the strategic importance of equipping young people with skills for employment, decent work and entrepreneurship.
- The theme for World Youth Skills Day 2023, as per the United Nations website, is skilling teachers, trainers and youth for a transformative future. The World Youth Skills Day 2023 theme highlights the essential role that teachers, trainers and other educators play in providing skills for youth to transition to the labour market and to actively engage in their communities and societies.

Bastille Day

- Bastille Day (also known as la Fête nationale) on July 14 commemorates the storming of the Bastille in Paris in 1789. The event sparked already heated times in France, leading to the French Revolution.
- All across the country, the French tricolor flag waves during parades, festivals, fireworks, and other celebrations. The Eiffel Tower lights up in the blue, white and red of the country's flag. The French proudly display motto Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité (liberty, equality, and fraternity).
- PM Modi in France - Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be given one of France's most spectacular recognitions on July 14 as guest of honour at the Bastille Day military parade, a part of a visit that has sealed high-profile defence deals.
- PM Modi and President Emmanuel Macron will watch French and Indian soldiers march down the tree-lined Champs-Élysée avenue in Paris, while French-made Rafale fighter jets India bought in 2015 will take part in the fly-past over the Arc de Triomphe, Reuters reported.

International Malala Day

- International Malala Day is observed every year on July 12 to celebrate the life and legacy of Pakistani education activist and Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai. A symbol of the fight for girls' education, Malala was first recognized globally on October 9, 2012, when she was shot in the head and neck by a Taliban gunman.
- History - The United Nations first celebrated International Malala Day on July 12, 2013 - a year after she was shot by a Taliban gunman in Pakistan for opposing their restrictions on female education in the country. The meeting of the UN was addressed by former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who was then serving as UN Special Envoy for Global Education. The day also coincides with Malala's birthday.
- According to the UN, the day calls for several world leaders to ensure free and mandatory education for girl children. It emphasizes that education is not a privilege but a fundamental right for everyone.
- Malala Day holds a great significance that highlights the importance of education and women's rights. The day serves as a reminder that individual determination and standing up for one's beliefs can have a profound impact on the world. On this day, people bring attention to the plight of millions of children who are still denied access to quality education.

World Paper Bag Day

- On July 12, World Paper Bag Day is celebrated annually to promote the significance of utilizing paper bags instead of plastic. This observance serves as a reminder to prioritize environmentally conscious choices in our everyday lives and encourages individuals and businesses to adopt more sustainable alternatives.
- World Paper Bag Day holds great importance in advocating for a greener and cleaner world. Plastic bags, being non-biodegradable, pose a significant threat to

our planet. They often end up in landfills or find their way into the oceans, endangering marine life. By choosing paper bags instead, we can reduce plastic waste and contribute to the preservation of our planet for future generations.

- Paper bags are made from renewable resources and are biodegradable, meaning they can be recycled and easily decomposed without causing harm to the environment. This is one of the primary benefits of using paper bags.
- The objective of this day is to raise public awareness about the detrimental impact of plastic bags on the environment and to encourage the adoption of paper bags and other eco-friendly alternatives

NABARD Foundation Day

- The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) celebrated its 42nd Foundation Day on July 12, 2023. The day was marked by a series of events across the country, including a webinar on the theme of “NABARD: 42 Years of Rural Transformation.”
- The webinar was addressed by the Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare, Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, who highlighted the important role that NABARD has played in the development of rural India. He said that NABARD has helped to increase agricultural production, improve rural infrastructure, and promote financial inclusion in rural areas.
- The webinar also featured presentations by senior officials from NABARD, who discussed the bank’s various initiatives in the areas of agriculture, rural development, and financial inclusion.
- NABARD is a national bank that provides financial and developmental support to the agricultural and rural sectors in India. It was established in 1982 by the Indian government to coordinate the activities of all rural credit institutions and to serve as the apex institution for the entire rural credit system.

World Population Day

- World Population Day is observed on July 11 each year. The global population is increasing rapidly, bringing forth a range of challenges and issues. Poverty, economic concerns, and maternal health are just a few of the areas affected by the growing population. World Population Day serves as a reminder to work towards addressing these issues and striving for a better future for everyone on the planet. The annual observance aims to raise awareness and educate people about the global population and its associated challenges.
- **History** - The United Nations established World Population Day in 1989. The initiative was proposed by Dr. KC Zachariah to mark the day when the global population reached five billion on July 11, 1987.
- World Population Day was first celebrated on 11 July 1990 in more than 90 countries. From then onwards, in partnership with governments and civil societies, a number of UNFPA country offices and other organizations and institutions commemorate this Day.

- **Theme** - The United Nations has designated the theme for this year's event as "Unleashing the power of gender Equality: Uplifting the voices of women and girls to unlock our world's infinite possibilities."

Kiswahili Language Day

- In the 1950s the United Nations established the Kiswahili language unit of United Nations Radio, and today Kiswahili is the only African language within the Directorate of the Global Communications at the United Nations. The United Nations General Assembly, through its resolution 71/328 of 11 September 2017, on multilingualism, welcomed implementation of a day dedicated to each of its official languages in order to inform and raise awareness of their history, culture and use, and encouraged the Secretary-General and institutions such as UNESCO to consider extending this important initiative to other non-official languages spoken throughout the world.
- In that regard, the 41st session of the General Conference of UNESCO adopted resolution 41 C/61 that recognized the role the Kiswahili language plays in promoting cultural diversity, creating awareness and fostering dialogue among civilizations and noted the need to promote multilingualism as a core value of the United Nations and an essential factor in harmonious communication between peoples, which promotes unity in diversity and international understanding, tolerance and dialogue. The resolution proclaimed 7 July of each year as World Kiswahili Language Day. Kiswahili is the first African language to be recognized in such a manner by the UN.
- World Kiswahili Language Day 2023: Unleashing Kiswahili's potential in the digital era. The second commemoration of the World Kiswahili Language Day will highlight the important role played by Kiswahili in the digital landscape

International Plastic Bag Free Day

- International Plastic Bag Free Day is observed annually to raise awareness about the harmful impacts of single-use plastic bags on the environment and the day serves as a reminder to individuals, communities and businesses worldwide to take action and reduce their reliance on plastic bags. Plastic bags contribute to pollution, harm wildlife, and take hundreds of years to decompose, causing long-term damage to ecosystems.
- History - The initiative was started by the Bag Free World campaign, a global movement aiming to reduce the use of single-use plastic bags. The campaign was launched in 2008 by a group of organisations and individuals concerned about the environmental impact of plastic bags.
- Theme - There is no specific theme for 2023 International Plastic Bag Free day. The significance of International Plastic Bag Free Day is to create a consciousness to take measures towards decrease the dependency on plastic bags and promoting other alternative solutions that are sustainable.

National Doctor's Day: India

- India celebrates National Doctors Day every year on 1 July in recognition of the valuable contribution of doctors and other medical professionals towards our nation-building. The day aims to recognize and honor the contributions of physicians to the well-being of society and to create awareness about the important role they play in saving lives and promoting public health.
- History - National Doctors Day is observed to commemorate the birth and death anniversary of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, one of India's most renowned physicians and the second Chief Minister of West Bengal. He was a highly respected doctor, a visionary statesman, and a recipient of the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award.
- Theme - This year, National Doctors Day will be celebrated on the theme "Celebrating Resilience and Healing Hands." The theme aims to recognize the valuable efforts our medical professionals contributed during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Canada Day

- Canada is set to celebrate Canada Day 2023 with celebrations planned across the country. The day marks the country's confederation, which brought together the three provinces into a single Dominion within the British Empire in 1867. The day is celebrated with excitement and joy on 1 July as on this date Canada became a self-governing nation and a Constitution was enacted.
- Why Canada Day is celebrated? - Canada Day commemorates the anniversary of the enactment of the Constitution Act, of 1867. It is a significant occasion for Canadians as it marks the country's confederation, which brought together the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and the Province of Canada (which was divided into Ontario and Quebec) into a single Dominion within the British Empire.
- Canada Day is an occasion to celebrate Canadian heritage, culture, and achievements. The day typically includes a variety of festivities, events, and traditions that highlight the diversity and unity of Canada. In many cities and towns, Canada Day celebrations feature parades, concerts, fireworks, cultural performances, and outdoor activities.

National Postal Worker Day

- National Postal Worker Day 2023: The special day dedicated to the hardships of the postal workers of the postal service department is celebrated every year. This is the day to respect their hard work and the extra mile that they go, literally, to ensure that we receive our letters on time. Before the age of telephones and the internet came in, the world heavily relied on letters for communication. Be it casual or formal communication, or reaching out to families from faraway lands, letters were the only way to communicate. The world depended heavily on the postal workers for the timely delivery of their letters to their loved ones, offices and families.

- History - In 1997, a postal carrier in the Seattle area started National Postal Worker Day to respect the efforts of his employees. Since then, National Postal Worker Day has been celebrated every year.
- Significance - The postal service is an outdoor job and brings with it its own set of challenges. From working in scorching heat to pouring rain, the postal workers ensure timely delivery of communication. This is the day to acknowledge their efforts and respect all that they do for us. Even though technology has made things easier over the last few years, it also brings the risk of malware and hacking. Postal service is a trusted form of sharing communication and ensures safe delivery of letters, without risks.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

FEDA hosts International Education Summit in Dubai with a focus on academic excellence

- The Federation of Economic Development Association (FEDA) hosted the International Education Summit & Conference 2023 at Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University (HBMSU) in Dubai. The event was attended by more than 120 participants from various academic disciplines.
- The summit was aimed at providing a platform for ambitious minds to showcase academic excellence. It featured a conference on the topic of Innovative Research In Economics Management, Information Technology and Legal Studies.
- This international platform provided scholars with an opportunity to present their cutting-edge research and findings, facilitating the exchange of ideas and knowledge. The event was graced by K. Lakshminarayanan, Minister of PWD Govt of Puducherry as the chief guest and Dr. Fahad Alsaadi, Vice Chancellor for Learners Development at Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University as the guest of honor.

Think20 Summit under India's G20 Presidency to begin in Mysuru, Karnataka

- Observer Research Foundation (ORF), as the Think20 Secretariat under India's G20 Presidency, will host the Think20 Summit in Mysuru from today till August 2. Think20 is the G20's official engagement group that serves as an 'ideas bank' for the multilateral grouping by bringing together think tanks and high-level experts to discuss policy issues relevant to the G20.
- The three-day conference will be a gathering of distinguished members of the seven Think20 Task Forces and policy experts from around the world. It provides an unparalleled opportunity to collectively showcase ideas and insights on the priorities of India's G20 Presidency, including issues such as lifestyle for sustainable development, macroeconomics and trade, women-led development, digital transformation, green transition, the global financial order, accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and reforming multilateralism.

India-Papua New Guinea sign MoU for India Stack collaboration

- The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) and the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (MICT) of Papua New Guinea signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for sharing India Stack, successful digital solutions implemented at population scale in New Delhi
- Earlier, MeitY hosted the inaugural Global DPI Summit in Pune on June 12-13. The event witnessed a physical presence of over 250 delegates, including approximately 150 foreign delegates from 50 countries, while more than 2,000 individuals participated virtually.
- India Stack is the moniker for a set of open APIs and digital public goods that aim to unlock the economic primitives of identity, data, and payments at population scale. Although the name of this project bears the word India, the vision of India Stack can be applied to any nation.

TN, UK signs MoU for project to conserve native plant species

- Ahead of the G20 environment and climate ministerial meeting in Chennai, the United Kingdom government signed a memorandum of understanding with Tamil Nadu to set up projects to conserve native plants.
- The project looks to conserve mangroves, forests and wetlands and release a green rating framework for industrial decarbonisation, a statement from the Tamil Nadu government said.
- UK's secretary of state for environment Therese Coffey and minister of state for climate Graham Stuart launched key projects with the Tamil Nadu government "setting new milestones in the strategic climate partnership" between the two,

MoUs Exchanged between CeNSE, IISc and LAM Research

- Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) announced the exchange of signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Centre for Nano Science and Engineering (CeNSE) at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru and Lam Research India at the ongoing SemiconIndia in Gandhinagar,
- The collaboration, initiated by this Ministry, brings together the academic excellence of IISc's CeNSE and the global expertise of Lam Research, a renowned supplier of innovative wafer fabrication equipment.
- Lam Research's ambitious goal is to utilise Semiverse Solutions to develop a 60,000 strong workforce in nano-fabrication in India over the next 10 years.
- The core objective of this collaboration is to jointly develop a customised course offering for Indian universities, dedicated to teaching semiconductor fabrication technology. This will utilise Lam Research's cutting-edge Semiverse Solutions virtual fabrication software, SEMulator3D.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates 'Civil 20' Summit in Jaipur;

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has said that a robust and enlightened Civil society is essential for a functioning democracy. Mr. Singh was addressing the inaugural ceremony of C- 20 summit in Jaipur this evening. He said that civil

societies enable the citizens to engage in deliberative dialogues and cooperative efforts, outside the adversarial arena of electoral politics, towards achieving national objectives. He said there are various sectors, ranging from education to the health sector, from gender equality to environment, where both Governments and Civil Society institutions have worked hand-in-hand and have achieved significant quantifiable progress.

- The event was attended by spiritual guru Mata Amritanandamayi, the chair of C 20 and many dignitaries from India and abroad. About 700 delegates are participating in the day's summit. Detailed deliberations on various topics will take place during 5 sessions to be held in three days. The C 20 event will present the policy recommendations prepared by its 16 Working Groups after extensive discussions with civil society organisations and policymakers worldwide.

TMS the Germany-based leading naval company has signed a MoU with Indian defence PSU MDL to modernize INS Shankush

- Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (TMS), the Germany-based leading naval company, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian defence PSU Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) for the overhaul and modernisation of submarine INS Shankush to extend its operational capability.
- The Indian Navy is seeking extension of its seven submarines to fill the void in its required strength which once was close to 22. The Ministry of Defence had signed a ₹2,725-crore contract with Mumbai-based MDL for the Medium Refit with Life Certification (MRLC) of INS Shankush, a HDW-class submarine, to extend its life. The first submarine in this class is undergoing MRLC and is likely to be back on sail by August.
- Over the next three years, INS Shankush will be modernised in close partnership with the state-owned shipyard MDL, Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems said in a statement on Thursday. While Thyssenkrupp will be responsible for supplying material packages of selected systems, equipment and components as well as for on-site technical support and pressure hull inspection, MDL will act as general contractor up till on-time delivery of the submarine, the German naval company stated.

Tata Technologies signs MoA with Chhattisgarh worth Rs 1,188 crore

- The Chhattisgarh government has signed an agreement worth Rs 1,188.36 crore with Tata Technologies for transforming 36 government Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) into an Industry 4.0 Technology Hub.
- Under the agreement, Tata Technologies will offer six new trades and 23 new short-term courses in the 36 ITIs, with state-of-the-art technical workshops and trainer arrangements, a state government spokesperson said. The company will also provide two trainers.
- The project aims to train over 10,000 youth annually in advanced skills, fostering better employment opportunities and will also provide employment opportunities to the skilled youth.

- The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Awanish Sharan, the director of skill development, technical education and employment department, and Pawan Bhageria, president of Tata Technologies Limited, in the presence of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

PM inaugurates Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam

- The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi today 29 July. It coincides with the 3rd anniversary of National Education Policy 2020. He also released the first installment of funds under the PM SHRI Scheme. 6207 schools received the first installment with a total amounting to 630 crore Rupees. He also released education and skill curriculum books translated into 12 Indian languages. The Prime Minister also took a walkthrough of the exhibition showcased on the occasion.
- Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister underlined the primacy of education among the factors that can change the destiny of the nation. "Our education system has a huge role in achieving the goals with which 21st century India is moving", he said. Emphasizing the importance of the Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam, the Prime Minister said that discussion and dialogue are important for education. The Prime Minister mentioned the coincidence of the last Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam taking place in the newly constructed Rudraksha convention center of Varanasi and this year's Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam taking place in the brand new Bharat Mandapam. This is the first event at the Mandapam after its formal inauguration.

India AI And Meta Sign MoU To Collaborate On AI Technologies,

- 'India AI' and Meta entered into a collaboration aimed at advancing research and development in AI & Emerging Technologies, as per a press release from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) on July 26, 2023. The partnership will use Meta's AI research models such as LLaMA, Massively Multilingual Speech, and No Language Left Behind to create datasets in Indian Languages to enable translation and large language models. Special attention will be given to low-resource languages (languages with fewer available resources to support their development and inclusion in AI systems).
- About: India AI - India AI is the national AI portal of India established by the IT Ministry, National eGovernance Division and NASSCOM (National Association of Software and Service Companies), under the Digital India Corporation. On its website, India AI describes itself as a "knowledge portal, research organisation and an ecosystem building initiative" that promotes "collaborations with various entities in India's AI ecosystem."

PM Modi inaugurated the Semicon India 2023 conclave in Gujarat

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Semicon India 2023 conclave at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, Gujarat today, July 28. He also address the

gathering on the occasion. The three-day conclave is being organized by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to showcase India's semiconductor strategy and development in the field of Semiconductors.

- The theme of the Conference is 'Catalysing India's Semiconductor Ecosystem'. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Union Minister of Electronics and IT Ashwini Vaishnav, and Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar, will be present at the inaugural ceremony. More from our correspondent:-

G-20 Conference on Green & Sustainable Growth Agenda for Global Economy to begin in New Delhi

- NITI Aayog will convene a two-day G20 conference on the Green and Sustainable Growth Agenda for the Global Economy in New Delhi today, July 28. The aim of this conference is to examine prospects and challenges for green and sustainable growth globally.
- NITI Aayog CEO, BVR Subrahmanyam will give opening remarks of the conference, while the goals and process of the workshop will be elaborated upon by G20 India Sherpa, Amitabh Kant, and Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog Suman K. Bery.
- The Aayog in a statement highlighted that the first day of the workshop will focus on themes related to energy, climate, technology, policy, and reshaping global finance for sustainable growth. The second day will discuss several themes related to multilateralism as well as adjustment, resilience, and inclusion in an uncertain world. The Aayog further said that around 40 leading thinkers will attend this conference.

India, Lao People's Democratic Republic signs MoUs for implementation of five Quick Impact Projects in different fields

- India and Lao People's Democratic Republic signed five Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) for the implementation of five Quick Impact Projects in the fields of education, health, water facility and IT were also signed. The MoUs were signed during the 3rd round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between the two countries today in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The Indian side was led by Secretary (East) in the Ministry of External Affairs Saurabh Kumar and Deputy Foreign Minister of Lao PDR Phoxay Khaykhamphithoune led his side.
- According to the Ministry of External Affairs, relations between the two countries are historical and cordial. During the consultation, both sides comprehensively reviewed the spectrum of bilateral relations and discussed ways to enhance cooperation in development partnership, economic and trade ties, agriculture, health, education, defence, and heritage conservation. The two sides also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest, as well as cooperation in multilateral fora such as the United Nations, ASEAN, and Mekong Ganga Cooperation.

Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar inaugurates National Conference on Moving Mental Health Beyond Institutions

- Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar inaugurated a national conference on “Moving Mental Health Beyond Institutions, here today. Justice Arun Mishra, Hon’ble Chairperson, NHRC was also present on the occasion. The objective of the conference is to discuss the challenges in the implementation of the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017 and deliberate on the way forward on resolution of mental health issues.
- Highlighting the importance of addressing the challenges of mental health and the Mental Healthcare Act 2017, Dr Pawar stated that “the Union govt is promoting the availability of and access to cost-effective treatment of common mental disorders”. She informed that mental health has been included in the flagship Ayushman Bharat scheme of the Union Govt. She also stated that “since the launch of the National Tele-Mental Health service, 42 Tele-Manas cells have been established that has already recorded over 2 lakh calls”.

4th ECSWG & Environment & Climate Ministers' meeting begins in Chennai

- The 4th Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group (ECSWG) and Environment and Climate Ministers meeting began in Chennai today, July 26.
- The three-day meeting brings together around 300 delegates from G20 member countries, invitee countries, and several International Organisations, with a focus on finalising the Ministerial Outcome and the Presidency Documents.
- The 4th ECSWG & Minister's Meeting will focus on three key areas - land restoration, circular economy, and blue economy. These topics will take centre stage during the meeting to address environmental and sustainability challenges. On the first day of the event, there will be two parallel sessions -: the Environment Track and the Climate Track. These sessions will delve into different aspects related to environmental and climate issues, with a focus on in-depth discussions about land degradation, biodiversity, and climate change.

5th Helicopter and Small Aircraft Summit

- The 5th Helicopter & Small Aircraft Summit will be held on the 25th of July 2023 at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh. The event will be jointly organised by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Government of Madhya Pradesh, Pawan Hans Ltd., and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).
- The Summit will be inaugurated by Chief Minister, of Madhya Pradesh Shivraj Singh Chouhan, and Union Minister of Civil Aviation & Steel Jyotiraditya M. Scindia. The event's theme is "Reaching the Last Mile: Regional Connectivity through Helicopters & Small Aircraft".

India Chamber of Business and Commerce signs MoA with ICMR to build future of Indian healthcare

- India Chamber of Business and Commerce and Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) have signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) at Ministry of

Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) in the presence of the Minister of MSME Narayan Rane to promote India as global hub in healthcare manufacturing and delivery and for creating a global stakeholders platform for building robust healthcare ecosystem promoting future of health capabilities in India and promoting investment creation in the field of healthcare.

- The MoA is in line with creating institutional arrangement for India Health Dialogue- A national flagship initiative driven by India Chamber of Business and Commerce in partnership with ICMR, IMA and Ministry of MSME to build profound business ecosystem for transforming health and healthcare for the future and building India led global supply chain networks.
- This partnership will also help in promoting international collaborations in innovation and technology, building healthcare delivery standards, academia and industry partnerships, capacity building and promoting new innovations in the field of health.

Ministry of Culture and Indian Navy signed a MoU to revive the Tankai method

- The Ministry of Culture and the Indian Navy have collaborated through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to revive and preserve the ancient 2000-year-old shipbuilding technique known as the 'stitched shipbuilding method' or 'Tankai method'.
- About: Tankai Method - The Tankai method is an ancient shipbuilding technique which entails stitching wooden planks together to build ships, eschewing the use of nails. By adopting this method, ships gain enhanced flexibility and durability, reducing their vulnerability to damage from shoals and sandbars.
- The stitched ship carries immense cultural significance in India, owing to its historical importance and the preservation of traditional craftsmanship. India has a rich maritime heritage throughout history, and the utilization of stitched ships played a pivotal role in facilitating trade, cultural exchange, and exploration. With the advent of European ships, shipbuilding techniques underwent a transformation; however, the art of stitching ships endured in certain coastal regions of India, predominantly for crafting small local fishing boats.

FSSAI and AOAC INTERNATIONAL signed a Memorandum of Understanding

- The Food Safety & Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and AOAC INTERNATIONAL (AOAC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate and enhance the food safety analytical ecosystem in India. The MoU signing ceremony took place at the FSSAI headquarters in New Delhi, in the presence of esteemed dignitaries, including Mr. G. Kamala Vardhana Rao, CEO of FSSAI, Mr. Satyen Kumar Panda, Advisor (Quality Assurance) FSSAI, Mr. Shrinvas Joshi, President, AOAC-India Section, Dr. Ganesh Ramamurthi - President-Elect, AOAC-India Section, and Dr. Saurabh Arora - Director, AOAC-India Section.

- The MoU, signifies the commitment of both FSSAI and AOAC to jointly work towards achieving common objectives for the advancement of food safety standards and analytical practices in the country

REC inks MoU with Avaada Group; to invest ₹20,000 crore over five years

- Avaada Group, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with REC under which the State-run company will invest ₹20,000 crore in the renewable energy solutions company over the next five years.
- The partnership between Avaada and the government-controlled non-banking financial company (NBFC) for the power sector was announced on the sidelines of the 4th meeting of the G20 Energy Transition Working Group (ETWG) in Goa.
- This agreement ushers in a massive surge of support for Avaada's diverse energy transition ventures with the total investment reaching an impressive ₹20,000 crore,
- In the upcoming five years, Avaada is primed to harness this considerable investment to spearhead a plethora of innovative renewable energy projects across India,

UNDP India signed MoU with Absolute for PMFBY

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Absolute, a bioscience company, have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) and enhance the resilience of farmers.
- According to a statement, the partnership between UNDP India and Absolute aims to enhance the implementation of the PMFBY and the Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (RWBCIS) by building technical capabilities of the scheme and digitalising service delivery of crop insurance and agricultural credit processes to increase reach and uptake of the schemes.
- It will also promote credit profiling of farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, and farmer producers organisations (FPOs), for accurate crop loss assessment and risk evaluation to mobilise agriculture financing.
- UNDP and Absolute will also use advanced technology and data-driven solutions to facilitate farmland identification and enhance farm monitoring, research and development, and analytical capabilities to facilitate data-driven policymaking and fraud analytics, ensuring efficient and transparent delivery of government support to vulnerable farmers,

India to host ASEAN Countries Conference on Traditional Medicines today 20th July

- India-ASEAN conference being held at New Delhi after almost a decade, ten ASEAN countries including Cambodia, Vietnam will participate,
- The Ministry of Ayush with support from the Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Mission to ASEAN and the ASEAN Secretariat is gearing up to host the Conference on Traditional Medicines for ASEAN Countries on 20th July 2023.

- The Conference on Traditional Medicines aims to strengthen the platform between India and ASEAN Countries to share their best practices and draw a roadmap for future cooperation in the field of Traditional Medicines.
- Addressing the Media at the Curtain Raiser event Union Minister for Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said, "The multi-dimensional relationship between India and ASEAN stands on a strong foundation of shared geographical, historical, and civilizational links which is far older that goes back to more than two millennia." He continued, "Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi at the 12th ASEAN India Summit at Myanmar in November 2014 enunciated 'Act East Policy', giving a new momentum to the strategic partnership. The India ASEAN conference on Traditional Medicine being held after almost a decade is a major step towards deepening cooperation of India with ASEAN."

The fourth G-20 Employment Working Group and the Labour and Ministers' Meeting begins in Indore

- The fourth Employment Working Group (EWG) meeting will focus on finalizing the Ministerial Declaration and outcome documents. In this the efforts of all the three meetings will be consolidated in this meeting. The EWG delegate's deliberations will end at the G-20 Labour and Ministers' Meeting (LEM), where they will gather to discuss and adopt these results. This information was given by Smt. Arti Ahuja, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment, in a press conference organized on the eve of the fourth Employment Working Group of G-20 and the meeting of Labour and Employment Ministers to be held in Indore today - 19th to 21 July.
- Earlier, Shri Rupesh Kumar Thakur, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment informed through a presentation that while 86 delegates are participating in the 4th EWG meeting, 165 delegates including 24 Ministers will participate in the LEM meeting. Heads of international organizations and employers' associations, including the ILO, OECD and the World Bank, will also attend the meeting.

BIMSTEC Foreign Ministers meeting starts in Bangkok, Thailand

- Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Foreign Ministers first ever meeting today started in Bangkok, Thailand.
- On the second day of his Bangkok Visit, Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar meets with foreign ministers of BIMSTEC member nations in Bangkok.
- Yesterday Mr. Jaishankar Co-chaired the 12th Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) meeting in Bangkok along with Foreign Minister of Lao PDR Saleumxay Kommasith. In a tweet, the Minister wrote, he Stressed, during the MGC meeting, the importance of expediting projects that have faced challenges in the recent past, especially the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway.

India and UAE sign MoUs in banking and education sectors

- India and UAE signed three MoUs in the banking and education sectors. The MoUs in the banking sector pertain to the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions and cooperation for interlinking their payment and messaging systems, while the MoU in the education sector signed between the Ministry of Education of the Government of India, the Department of Education and Knowledge of Abu Dhabi, and the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi relates to setting up of an IIT campus in Abu Dhabi.
- The MoU signed by the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Shaktikanta Das, and the Governor of the Central Bank of UAE, Khaled Mohamed Balama for the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions covers all current account transactions and permitted capital account transactions. This arrangement would also promote investments and remittances between the two countries.
- The two central banks also agreed to cooperate on linking their Fast Payment Systems (FPSs) - Unified Payments Interface (UPI) of India with the Instant Payment Platform (IPP) of UAE, linking the respective Card Switches (RuPay switch and UAESWITCH) and exploring the linking of payments messaging systems. The UPI-IPP linkage will enable the users in either country to make fast, convenient, safe, and cost-effective cross-border funds transfers. The linking of Card Switches will facilitate the mutual acceptance of domestic cards and the processing of card transactions.

Ministry of Textile and Gujarat Government signed MoU for PM MITRA PARK at Vansi in Navsari district

- Union Textile Minister Piyush Goyal said Focus of PM MITRA PARK is to bring quality, scale and sustainability in textile sector The park is likely to attract the investment of Rs. 10 lakh crore and create employment for 3 lakh people.
- Inspired by the 5F vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister - Farm to Fibre to Fabric to Fashion to Foreign, Gujarat is setting-up PM MITRA Park in Vansi village, Jalalpore Taluka in Navsari District after receiving formal approval from the Government of India.
- The program for MoU signing between Government of India (Ministry of Textiles) and Government of Gujarat was held in Surat, Gujarat on 13.07.2023. The event was attended by dignitaries namely Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Bhupendrabhai Patel, Hon'ble Union Minister of Textiles, Commerce & Industry and Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Textiles and Railways, Smt. Darshana Vikram Jardosh, Hon'ble Minister of Industries, Gujarat, Shri Balvantsinh Rajput, Hon'ble Minister of State, Shri Harshbhai Sanghvi and officials of State Government.

3rd Sherpas G20 meeting began in Hampi, Karnataka

- The third Sherpas meeting under India's G20 Presidency begin in Hampi today in Karnataka. Chaired by India's G20 Sherpa, Amitabh Kant, the three days meeting on the banks of river Tungabhadra near UNESCO World Heritage site Hampi will

deliberate and engage in co-authoring the Leaders Declaration to be adopted by the G20 leaders in New Delhi Summit. Issues being considered are Green development, climate finance, lifestyle for environment, accelerated, inclusive and resilient growth, accelerating progress on sustainable development goals, technological transformation and digital public infrastructure, multilateral institutions for the 21st century and women-led development.

- Akashvani's Correspondent report: Over 120 delegates from G20 member countries, invitees and International Organisations led by India's G20 Sherpa will negotiate the text reflecting Presidency priorities. These priorities were arrived at after incorporating the feedback from the voices of Global South Summit. After intense deliberations in the day, the delegates will explore Hampi's enigmatic landscape of monuments and boulders spread over 4000 hectares. They will witness the city plan, waterways, temples and other infrastructure built during the Vijayanagar empire that flourished between 1336 to 1646 AD. They will also experience the local craft and handicrafts and cultural performances from Karnataka. Sudhindra Akashvani news Bengaluru.

Defence Ministry and FSSAI sign MOU to promote use of millet and healthy eating practices among armed forces

- The Defence Ministry and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote the use of millets and healthy eating practices among the armed forces and ensure availability of safe and nutritious food. The MoU was signed in the presence of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh and Health Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya in New Delhi today.
- The Union Health Ministry said, this collaboration will ensure training of food handlers and chefs of mess, canteens of the Armed Forces and other food outlets on food safety and hygiene. It signifies a shared commitment to the health and well-being of the Armed Forces to enable them to remain strong and resilient in their service to the nation. The MoU will also encourage the families of the Armed Forces and the community at large to adopt nutritious diets, make healthy food choices, and maintain food safety.

Maharashtra government and Gogoro made an MoU to setup smart battery ecosystem

- Maharashtra and Gogoro have announced that the Maharashtra government has presented Gogoro with an offer letter to enter into an 'Ultra Mega Project' agreement to manufacture vehicles, smart battery packs and battery swap stations, and deploy an open and accessible battery swapping infrastructure in the State beginning in late 2023.
- The proposed Ultra Mega Project deal would exceed \$1.5 billion (Rs 12,300 crore) and include financial incentives and support from Maharashtra. The offer letter follows an MOU between Maharashtra and Gogoro that was previously announced at Davos in January 2023.

- The Maharashtra government categorizes Ultra Mega Projects as significant strategic investments exceeding \$500 million that usually result in government incentives to ensure successful project execution. Gogoro's request for financial incentives was approved and endorsed by the Maharashtra state cabinet and the two parties expect to complete the agreement soon.

L&T signs Master Ship Repair Agreement with US Navy

- Larsen & Toubro said it has signed the Master Shipyard Repair Agreement with the US Navy to further strengthen the partnership between the two countries in the defence sector.
- L&T's Kattupalli Shipyard, near Chennai, a major node in the Southern Defence Corridor, has been undertaking voyage repairs of the Military Sealift Command vessels, the firm said in a statement.
- After an elaborate assessment by the US Navy and the Military Sealift Command, the shipyard qualified for the Master Shipyard Repair Agreement (MSRA). This is equivalent to undertaking warship refits, for which the shipyard has already been qualified by the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard,
- The agreement marks yet another step in the growing relationship between the biggest and the oldest democracies of the world, further strengthening the partnership between them in the defence sector,
- This agreement marks a global recognition of our unmatched capabilities and facilities to undertake quality ship repairs and refits...L&T will dedicate all its dynamism, innovation, and Shipbuilding 4.0 techniques to meet the quality and delivery requirements of the US side,

Sixth India-Arab Partnership Conference 2023 was organized in New Delhi

- Sixth India-Arab Partnership Conference 2023 was organized in New Delhi on 11 - 12 July 2023, External Affairs Secretary (CPV & OIA) Dr Ausaf Sayeed said, India has strong relations with the West Asian countries and the region is the largest trade partner of India. He said UAE was the third-largest trading partner while Saudi Arabia, was the fourth-largest partner during the last financial year.
- Talking about the Sixth India-Arab Partnership Conference, Dr Sayeed said, the Conference has provided a useful platform to the business community on both sides to explore new prospects for trade and investment. He highlighted the importance of cooperation in the field of the renewable energy sector, especially green hydrogen.

11th meeting of the Executive Board of Association of World Election Bodies

- The Chief Election Commissioner of India, Shri Rajiv Kumar, along with a delegation from the Election Commission of India (ECI), recently attended the 11th meeting of the Executive Board of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) in Cartagena, Colombia. The meeting provided an opportunity for Electoral management bodies (EMBs) from around the world to collaborate and address challenges affecting election integrity.

- Association of World Election Bodies A-WEB plays a crucial role in promoting cooperation among (Electoral management body) EMB and facilitating the exchange of experiences and best practices. The association, which comprises 119 EMBs as members and 20 regional associations/organizations as associate members, provides a platform for EMBs to learn from one another and enhance their electoral management processes. By sharing expertise and strategies, EMBs can effectively address common challenges and improve election integrity globally.

International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) and Climate Policy Initiative sign MoU to cooperate on Sustainable Finance

- The International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) and Climate Policy Initiative – India (CPI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for mutual assistance and cooperation to increase mobilisation of global sustainable capital flows into India.
- The commencement of India's G20 Presidency begins with the theme "One Earth, One Family, One Future". Sustainable development is a key priority that runs across the priorities of G20 working groups. Mobilisation of sustainable finance is critical to achieve transition to green and resilient economies. IFSCA has taken significant steps in accelerating global sustainable capital flows by creating a conducive regulatory environment, based on international best practices, focused especially on the needs of India and developing countries. With deep expertise in finance and policy, CPI is an analysis and advisory organization that works to improve the most important energy and land use practices around the world.

India, Panama signs MoU on electoral cooperation

- The Election Commission of India and Electoral Tribunal (ET) of Panama on Friday signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Panama City to establish the institutional framework for their ongoing cooperation in the field of election management and administration, the government said in a press release.
- A three member ECI delegation led by Chief Election Commissioner of India Rajiv Kumar held interactions with Presiding Magistrate, Electoral Tribunal of Panama Alfredo Juncá Wendehake on strengthening collaboration and knowledge exchange between the two Election Management Bodies (EMBs). Eduardo Valdes Escoffery, first vice presidential magistrate and Luis A. Guerra Morales, second vice presidential magistrate, ET of Panama were also present.
- ECI has been expanding its links and cooperation with foreign Election Management Bodies (EMBs) through its 'International Cooperation Programme'. Having signed MoUs with Mexico, Brazil and Chile in the past years, this is the fourth MoU signed by ECI with an EMB in the Latin Americas region, with an overall 31 MoUs with EMBs and international organisations across the world.

National Water Mission Inks Pact with Indian Plumbing Association To Improve Water Use Efficiency

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed today between Bureau of Water Use Efficiency (BWUE), National Water Mission (NWM), Ministry of Jal Shakti and Indian Plumbing Association (IPA) for a Water Positive India by awareness creation & promotion of rain water harvesting structures, low flow fixtures & sanitary ware, treatment of grey & black water, water audit of built environment. The MoU was signed by Ms. Archana Varma, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, on behalf of National Water Mission, Ministry of Jal Shakti and Shri Gurmit Singh Arora, National President, Indian Plumbing Association based in Okhla, New Delhi.
- Shri Gurmeet Arora, National President, Indian Plumbing Association added that his organization would give full cooperation for increasing water use efficiency in domestic sector by 50-60% (reducing water use from 135 lpcd to 60 lpcd). He further stressed water audit for built environments (residential buildings, hotels etc.) to achieve the target of Net Zero Water Buildings.

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Voyager Space signs Memorandum of Understanding with New-Space India Limited to explore Collaborative Opportunities in Space Technology

- BENGALURU, India, July 7, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Voyager Space, a global leader in space exploration, is pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), the commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), to foster collaboration in spacecraft launch and deployment opportunities on-board NSIL's Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) and Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).
- Under this MOU, Voyager Space and NSIL will explore launch and deployment opportunities for small satellites orbited by SSLV and PSLV. The two organizations will also study the use of space qualified components from NSIL in support of spacecraft manufacturing, deployment, operations, and other areas of interest.

Gujarat: Govt inks six MoUs with private industries for mangrove plantation under MISHTI scheme

- In Gujarat, the mangroves will be planted over 3000 hectares area of land to conserve coastal ecosystems. Gujarat government inked six MoUs with private industries for the mangrove plantation under the MISHTI scheme at Dwarka in the presence of Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change Bhupender Yadav.
- Addressing the Hariyali Mahotsav at Dwarka in Gujarat, Mr. Yadav said India has devised a unique biodiversity conservation model through a holistic approach. He also underlined the critical role of mangroves in preventing coastal erosion. Yadav also participated in the mangrove plantation drive in Dwarka and congratulated the Gujarat government for joining hands with private players for the plantation of mangroves in the State.
- He said the initiative will aid restoration and conservation of mangroves and achieve India's carbon sink targets. Gujarat State Environment Minister Mulu Bera was also present on the occasion.

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- Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Archana Varma, Additional Secretary & Mission Director, National Water Mission asserted that today is the historic day for Bureau of Water Use Efficiency as the IPA has been actively promoting fixtures that are water sensitive and consume less water and the MoU would help in promoting its objective of increasing water use efficiency.
- Shri Gurmeet Arora, National President, Indian Plumbing Association added that his organization would give full cooperation for increasing water use efficiency in domestic sector by 50-60% (reducing water use from 135 lpcd to 60 lpcd). He further stressed water audit for built environments (residential buildings, hotels etc.) to achieve the target of Net Zero Water Buildings.

Urban-20 Mayoral Summit begins in Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar in Gujarat today, July7

- The Urban 20 (U20) Mayoral Summit will begin today in the twin cities of Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. Delegates and participants from 57 cities across the world and 35 cities from India will participate in the two-day summit. U20 is

an Engagement Group under India's G20 presidency. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Kaushal Kishore will inaugurate the summit.

- Akashvani correspondent reports that thematic sessions on the six U20 priority areas including environmental responsibility, climate finance, and water security will be organized during the summit. Mayors from across the world and Indian cities will share experiences of their respective city-level actions and initiatives. Over 500 participants, including Mayors, Deputy Mayors, city officials, and knowledge partners will attend the summit.
- The event will also host an exhibition showcasing India's urban story, especially city-level success, notable projects, and innovative initiatives. The key outcome of the U20 Mayoral Summit is the handover of the U20 Communiqué by the attending Mayors to the G20 leaders. The U20 Communiqué is an action-oriented collaboratively prepared document that brings to the fore the role that cities can play in taking forward the G20 agenda.

MoU signed between India And Japan for the development of the Integrated Mast

- A Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) for the development of the Integrated Mast United Combined Radio Antenna (NORA-50) was recently signed by Japan and India. Multiple antennas are included into the distinctive horn-shaped NORA-50 for tactical data link, TACAN (Tactical Air Navigation), and communications. By combining different antennas into a single structure, this integrated mast reduces the radar cross-section (RCS) and improves operational capabilities.
- The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between India and Japan represents the two nations' close strategic alliance and cooperative efforts in defence technology. Their common dedication to enhancing defence capabilities via collaborative research, development, and innovation is reflected in this. India and Japan are working together to create cutting-edge technologies that tackle shared defence issues and support regional stability.
- Modern warfare places a high value on the NORA-50, the Integrated Mast United Combined Radio Antenna. There are many benefits to combining antennas into a single structure. First, it lowers the RCS, which makes the platform harder for enemy radar systems to identify. In order to reduce the vulnerability of military assets and increase mission success rates overall, this improved stealth capabilities are essential.

Fourth edition of Space Economy Leaders Meeting under India's G20 presidency begins in Bengaluru

- As part of India's G20 Presidency, the fourth edition of the Space Economy Leaders Meeting began in Bengaluru today, July 6. Addressing the delegates during the inaugural event, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh said that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Indian Space programme's benefits were extended to neighbouring friendly countries and as part of space sector reforms,

the private partnership was encouraged in this sector. He said that due to this decision, 140 start-ups have come up by successfully contributing to the Indian space programme.

- Jitendra Singh said that the space programmes in the country have experienced a quantum jump in the last eight to nine years. India is today a frontline nation through its Chandrayaan and Gaganyaan programmes.
- The two-day meeting on the theme 'Towards a New Space Era' has participation from the Heads of National Space Agencies, leaders of space industries of G20 Countries and various guest nations. It will discuss the responsibilities of the space-faring nations for an enhanced share of space economy in the global economy. The Chairman of ISRO Somnath S, IN-SPACe Chairman Dr. Pawan Goenka and G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant also spoke on the occasion.

DGCA, EASA ink MoU on drone standards, will work on training programmers

- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) to jointly develop standards for drones.
- These standards will be related to licensing of personnel, training, air traffic management and infrastructure, and Unmanned Aircraft System Traffic Management (UTM) services.
- Additionally, the DGCA and EASA will collaborate on conducting conferences, workshops, and training programmers in the area.
- In April this year, the DGCA signed a letter of intent (LoI) on 'Unmanned Aircraft Systems' and 'Innovative Air Mobility' with the (EASA) during the EU-India Aviation Summit held in New Delhi.
- The MoU will also ensure regular information sharing between the two authorities on the technological developments and research in this area and also their respective strategies for outreach to relevant stakeholders.
- DGCA said the signing of the MoU will enable harmonised standards and growth of the drone sector in the country.

Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture & Ras Al Khaimah of UAE signs MoU to enhance agri-collaboration

- Ras Al Khaimah Economic Zone (RAKEZ) and the Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at promoting mutual growth and development in the food and agriculture sector of the UAE and India.
- The agreement, signed by RAKEZ Group CEO Ramy Jallad and ICFA Chairman Dr. MJ Khan, is intended to strengthen the strategic collaboration between the two countries. The partnership also aims to facilitate knowledge exchange, trade promotion, investment, and research and development collaboration.
- India, being one of the UAE's largest trading partners, brings valuable innovation and expertise in the food and agriculture sectors, particularly in sustainable farming and food processing technologies.

- The collaboration aims to provide opportunities for knowledge exchange and capacity-building, allowing tech and agricultural companies in the RAKEZ business community to enhance their methods and share innovative, sustainable farming techniques with major Indian companies.

India Post & Canada Post signed a bilateral Tracked Packet agreement

- India Post & Canada Post signed a bilateral Tracked Packet agreement on 7th June 2023 to start International Tracked Packet Service. The agreement is an important step towards promoting cross-border e-commerce exports between the two countries.
- The service will provide a competitive shipping solution for packets up to 2.0 kg with a tracking facility and fulfil a major demand of exporters. Now India has this service with 39 partner countries and is in line with India's focus on increasing exports.
- Canada Post, a Crown corporation that functions as the primary postal operator in Canada. It operates as a group of companies called The Canada Post Group. It employs approximately 64,000 full and part-time employees. The Corporation holds an interest in Purolator Courier, Innovapost, Progistix-Solutions and Canada Post International Limited.

International Conference on Green Hydrogen to encourage emerging technologies - 5th-7th July

- The International Conference on Green Hydrogen is being organised by the Government of India during 5th-7th July 2023 in New Delhi. It aims to bring together the global scientific, policy, academic and industrial leaders to discuss recent advances and emerging technologies in the entire green hydrogen value chain.
- The event is expected to enable the sector stakeholders to explore the evolving green hydrogen landscape and innovation-driven solutions in the sector. In this way, it aims at strengthening the sustainability ecosystem of the sector.
- Organized by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in partnership with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and Office of Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the event will be inaugurated by R K Singh, Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy.

DGCA signs pact with EU aviation safety agency on drones

- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) to cooperate on unmanned aircraft systems and innovative air mobility.
- The MoU follows a letter of intent (LoI) that was signed during the EU-India Aviation Summit in New Delhi on April 20, 2023. The MoU will focus on

collaboration on unmanned aircraft and innovative air mobility between the two civil aviation authorities, according to a press release.

- It is to ensure regular information sharing on technological developments and research in this area. According to the Aviation Ministry, the MoU will result in conferences, workshops, training programmes conducted by DGCA and EASA.

Indian Navy signs MoU with IPRCL for gallery at National Maritime Heritage Complex

- A morandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on 2 June, 2023 between the Indian Coast Guard, Indian Navy, and Indian Port Rail and Ropeway Corporation (IPRCL) for the construction, and commissioning of a gallery at the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) in Lothal, Gujarat.
- The signing of the MoU took place in the presence of Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal and Chief Minister of Gujarat, Bhupendra Patel.
- The gallery will be based on the theme 'Evolution of the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard' at the NMHC. It will comprise a maritime museum, a lighthouse museum, maritime theme parks, amusement park centres, adopting an edutainment approach using the latest technology.

National Anti-Doping Agency, India signs MoU with South Asia Regional Anti-Doping Organization

- National Anti-Doping Agency, India signed a Memorandum of Understanding with South Asia Regional Anti-Doping Organisation (SARADO) in New Delhi today. SARADO is comprised of Anti-Doping Organisations from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The MoU aims to increase Regional Cooperation in anti-doping in sports.
- Speaking on the occasion Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur highlighted India's increasing participation and achievements in the international sporting arena. He also talked about the government's responsibility in promoting clean sports efforts and contributing to the global anti-doping movement. Mr Thakur said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has envisioned India to become a sporting powerhouse in the coming years. He said, the Ministry is working relentlessly to improve Indian athletes' sports performance at the national and international levels. Mr Thakur said, the approach to anti-doping is rooted in both, prevention and detection.

UAE-India Economic Summit in Abu Dhabi

- The UAE-India Economic Summit, themed "Fostering Synergies—Uniting the Falcon and Tiger Economies," took place on July 3, 2023, at the ADGM Auditorium in Al Maryah Island, Abu Dhabi. The event, jointly hosted by SBI Capital Markets Limited (SBICAPS) and Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), brought together industry leaders from India and the UAE, and marked the official opening of SBICAPS ADGM Branch Office.

- The summit featured engaging panel discussions on topics such as startups, sustainability, green energy, capital markets, and stressed asset resolution. Prominent figures in attendance included Dinesh Khara, Chairman of State Bank of India, Sunjay Sudhir, Indian Ambassador to UAE, Hamad Sayah Al Mazrouei, CEO of ADGM Registration Authority, along with senior representatives from ADGM and SBICAPS.

Two-day Startup20 Shikhar summit begins in Gurugram, Haryana

- The two-day Startup20 Shikhar summit hosted by the Startup20 Engagement Group has begun in Gurugram, Haryana. The summit will serve as a landmark event for the official release of the final Policy Communiqué.
- The Communiqué will lay the foundation for a transformative and inclusive startup ecosystem, fostering economic growth, innovation, and cross-border collaboration. The Startup20 Engagement Group operates under the India G20 Presidency, aiming to shape the future of the global startup ecosystem. Our correspondent reports that Startup20 strives to foster innovation, collaboration, and inclusive growth to unleash the full potential of startups for economic prosperity and societal impact.

Parliamentary Standing Committee to hold meeting on UCC today to seek views of stakeholders

- The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice will hold a meeting on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) today.
- Committee head and BJP Rajya Sabha MP Sushil Modi informed that the panel will seek the views of the stakeholders on the matter. He added the meeting of the Committee is non-political as the panel has members from all political parties. The UCC proposes to formulate and implement personal laws of citizens which apply to all citizens equally regardless of their religion, sex, gender and sexual orientation. Currently, the personal laws of various communities are governed by their religious scriptures.
- On the 14th of last month, the Law Commission of India solicited the views and ideas of the public and recognised religious organisations to examine the UCC. On the 14th of last month, the Law Commission of India solicited the views and ideas of the public and recognised religious organisations to examine the UCC.s,

PM Modi inaugurates 17th Indian Cooperative Congress

- The Prime Minister inaugurated the 17th Indian Cooperative Congress (ICC) in New Delhi. Speaking on this occasion, the Prime Minister said, several steps have been taken by the government for strengthening of the cooperative sector in the country.
- He said that the Government is working for the welfare of farmers and striving to make each and every sector of agriculture, developed and self-reliant. He said the Central Government spends over six lakh 50 thousand crore rupees every year on agriculture and farmers' welfare. He said, small and medium farmers

have benefited immensely from the government schemes. He said, under the BJP government, the farmers are guaranteed to receive 50 thousand annually through different schemes.

- Talking about the various initiatives taken for the welfare of farmers, the Prime Minister said, crores of small farmers are getting the benefits of PM-KISAN scheme. He said, over two lakh 50 thousand crore rupees have been directly transferred in bank accounts of farmers under the scheme.

Tata AIA partners with WhatsApp, PayU to introduce industry's first premium payment feature

- Tata Group-backed life insurance arm, Tata AIA on Wednesday introduced digital payments via WhatsApp and Unified Payment Interfaces. This newly added payment option is first-of-its-kind in the insurance industry and offers an instant premium payment facility through WhatsApp and UPI-enabled payment option
- For easy use for both tech and non-tech-savvy consumers, it also offers a hassle-free premium payment experience.
- Through the new feature, policyholders can pay premiums digitally and receive a quick premium payment confirmation & acknowledgment.

Nasscom Signs MOU with MIDAS and MAG As Its First UK Launchpad to Help Indian Tech SMEs

- Nasscom has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with MIDAS (Manchester's Inward Investment Agency) and MAG (Manchester Airports Groups) to promote innovation, investment, and technological exchange between Greater Manchester, the UK, and India.
- This MoU will lead to the establishment of the first Nasscom launchpad in the UK, following Canada. The arrangement will provide small Indian tech companies, interested in setting up their presence in Greater Manchester, to have access to 180 days of rent-free office space within offices based at Manchester Airport, where a number of tech-focused companies are already based.
- The companies will also be assisted with eco-system connects, introductions across stakeholders, and other hand-holding mechanisms to aid in "Faster Go-To-Market". Nasscom will actively promote the proposition among its membership base.
- The MoU is an outcome of Nasscom's visit to the UK in September 2022, supported by the Department of Business and Trade, Govt of UK, when several companies showed interest in setting up their businesses in Manchester. About seven Indian companies will be setting up their operations in the first phase of this pilot project.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Byculla railway station gets UNESCO's Asia Pacific Cultural Heritage award

- The prestigious UNESCO Asia Pacific Cultural Heritage award was received by Byculla Railway Station located in Mumbai, this award was declared in November 2022, highlighting the station's significant contribution to cultural heritage conservation. The recognition came after the station underwent extensive restoration work, bringing it back to its original glory.
- An NGO of BJP politician, namely 'I Love Mumbai' and spoke person Shaina NC took up the restoration work of the Byculla railway station, with the help of heritage conservation architect Abha Lamba and Minal Bajaj Trust, which partnered in the conservation work.
- **About:** Byculla Railway Station - Byculla is railway station on the Central line of the Mumbai Suburban Railway. It is located in the neighbourhood of Byculla. The station is a Grade-I heritage structure, It is considered to be one of the oldest railway station that is still in operation. With a history dating back 169 years, the station stands as a testament to the rich heritage of India's railway system.

Shankari Chandran wins Miles Franklin Literary Award 2023

- Ten years ago, Sri Lankan-origin Australian writer Shankari Chandran faced difficulty in getting her debut book published. The reason: publishers thought her novel wasn't "Australian" enough to be successful in their local market. And now, Chandran has been announced as the winner of the 2023 Literary Award for her novel 'Chai Time at Cinnamon Gardens'.
- Chandran's award-winning novel 'Chai Time at Cinnamon Gardens' is a story about family, memories, community, race. It is an intergenerational epic that highlights Australia's difficult and complex equation with multiculturalism and the traumas of post-colonialism. It also highlights how our stories shape the people that we are today. This is Chandran's third novel.
- **About: Miles Franklin Literary Award** - The Miles Franklin Literary Award is an annual prize given to "a novel which is of the highest literary merit and presents Australian life in any of its phases". This year's judges for the award included: Richard Neville- State Library of NSW Mitchell librarian and Chair; author Bernadette Brennan; translator Mridula Nath Chakraborty; critic James Ley; and poet Elfie Shiosaki.

Seven-year-old Indian-origin girl wins UK PM's Points of Light award

- A seven-year-old Indian-origin schoolgirl, who started volunteering for a United Nations' sustainability initiative against microplastic pollution when she was just three, has been awarded the British Prime Minister's Points of Light award.
- Moksha Roy, who received the award from Deputy British Prime Minister Oliver Dowden last week, has the distinction of being the world's youngest sustainability advocate.
- Moksha has been recognised for volunteering for several sustainability campaigns, including raising funds to help children in need.

- “Moksha has set an excellent example in her work championing UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She has gone to significant lengths to have these included in the school curriculum and has been in communication with leaders all over the world to encourage them to consider this,” said Dowden.
- “Her school no longer uses plastic glitter, confetti or plastic art supplies – this is a testament to her strong beliefs and ability to change those around her to create a better world,” he said.

Kishan Reddy conferred with Global Incredible Inc leadership Award

- Union Minister of Tourism, Culture G Kishan Reddy was conferred with the ‘Global Incredible Inc Leadership Award’ by the US India SME Council - an organization that promotes trade, commerce, and people-to-people exchange programs between the United States and India
- The award was conferred by eminent citizens from Maryland state, US in recognition of his endeavors towards promoting tourism and the rich culture of India.
- On receiving the award the minister tweeted, "Humbled to have received the ‘Leadership Award’ from The US India SME Council - an organization that promotes trade, commerce, and people-to-people exchange programs between the United States & India_
- The award was conferred by eminent citizens from Maryland state, US in recognition of the endeavors towards promoting tourism and the rich culture of India under the guidance and leadership of PM Shri @narendramodi Ji" _
- Kishan Reddy is in the US and he attended the United Nations High Level Political Forum (UN HLPF) on Economic, Social and Environmental Sustainability on Tourism.

IIT professor wins global recognition with Eni Award for clean water innovations

- Indian scientist Professor Thalappil Pradeep from IIT Madras has been honored with the esteemed Eni Award for his groundbreaking research in energy and environment. The award recognises his innovative work in providing affordable clean water using advanced nanoscale materials. The President of Italy is expected to present the award to Professor Pradeep in the near future.
- **ABOUT ENI AWARD** - The Eni Award is highly regarded globally, with previous recipients including renowned Nobel laureates and distinguished scientists. The selection committee, which includes Nobel laureates, ensures that only exceptional individuals receive this prestigious recognition.
- Professor Pradeep's remarkable contributions in the field of nanotechnology and sustainable water purification have earned him this coveted honor, Established in 2007, the award aims to foster radical breakthroughs in energy efficiency, renewables, decarbonisation, and environmental preservation. It serves as a platform to encourage and inspire the next generation of researchers to address the pressing challenges in energy and environmental sustainability.

Aruna Sairam, Shashank Subramanyam presented Chevalier award

- Carnatic vocalist Aruna Sairam and flautist Shashank Subramanyam were conferred with the prestigious Chevalier award by the French government at a ceremony in Chennai on Saturday evening. The award was given in recognition of their contribution to the music field and development of Indo-France relations.
- According to a citation from the French Ministry of Culture, the award was intended to honour personalities for their creativity in cultural spheres and their works that formed the wealth of the cultural heritage. Ms. Sairam and Mr. Subramanyam were conferred the title of Chevalier De L'orde Des Arts Et Des Lettres.
- The award is considered to be one of the primary distinctions from among the four ministerial orders of the French Republic. The government had recognised their talent and dedication towards arts and culture.

Jammu and Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission bagged SKOCH Award 2023

- The Jammu-Kashmir Rural Livelihood Mission (JKRL) has bagged the SKOCH Award under the theme "State of Governance India 2047" in Gold category.
- JKRL has received this award for its outstanding efforts in creating marketing avenues for the Self-Help Group in the U.T.
- The SKOCH Award marks a significant milestone for JKRL, being the first award received since the inception of the scheme.
- The award gives recognition to the JKRL for its hard work and dedication of the JKRL team, especially its Mission Director who has been instrumental in driving the Mission's major goal of creating marketing opportunities from district-level avenues to national-level platforms.

Adani Transmission Wins Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2023

- Adani Transmission Limited has received 'Golden Peacock Environment Management Award 2023 (GPEMA) in the 'Power Transmission Sector' from 'Institute of Directors.'
- In 2023, an assessment group comprising Environment, Health and safety, Energy and Climate Change experts assesses over 520 applications.
- These applications were approved by Justice M.N. The review was done by an eminent jury committee headed by Venkatachaliah.
- About: Golden Peacock Environment Management Award - The award is given for reducing its ecological footprint through programs such as zero waste in landfills, single-use plastic free, water-positive operations, promoting renewable energy integration and implementation of best-in-class environmental management strategies.
- Steel Authority of India (SAIL) has been awarded with the Golden Peacock Environment Management Award in 2021 in the steel sector by the Institute of Directors. SAIL has been the winner of this award for three consecutive years.

- Adani Transmission Limited (ATL) was declared Winner by its B2C arms i.e. Adani Electric Mumbai Limited for its unique strategic initiative of increasing renewable energy in bulk power purchase for distribution in Mumbai region.

PM Modi conferred with Grand Cross of Legion of Honour- France's highest award

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, France's highest award by H.E. Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic of France. PM Modi thanked President Macron for this singular honour on behalf of the people of India. The award ceremony took place at the Elysee Palace in Paris.
- Earlier, PM Modi addressed the Indian community at La Seine Musicale in Paris. During his address, he highlighted the multi-faceted India-France Strategic Partnership, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Prime Minister also announced about opening of new consulate in Marseille, France.
- Before that, PM Modi met H.E. Elisabeth Borne, Prime Minister of France on 13 July 2023. Both the leaders discussed furthering cooperation in various areas such as economic and trade, energy, environment, education, mobility, railways, digital public infrastructure, museology and people to people ties.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Belgian tennis great Justine Henin receives the Philippe Chatrier Award

- The International Tennis Federation has awarded Justine Henin its highest honour, the Philippe Chatrier Award.
- Henin won seven Grand Slam singles titles, an Olympic gold medal, and was part of Belgium's team that won the Fed Cup — now called the Billie Jean King Cup — in 2001.
- The award, named after the former ITF president, was introduced in 1996 and recognizes people who have made significant contributions to the sport on and off the court.
- About: Justine Henin - Justine Henin CMW is a Belgian former world No. 1 tennis player. She spent a total of 117 weeks as the world No. 1 and was the year-end No. 1 in 2003, 2006 and 2007.

NLC bags GeM award in "Timely Payments (CPSEs)" category for 2023

- NLC India Limited (NLCIL), a Navratna company under the Ministry of Coal, bagged GeM award in the category "Timely Payments (CPSEs)" for the year 2023 for its outstanding contribution in improving the reliability of e-market practices in line with the vision of GeM. NLC India Limited registered and on-boarded in the GeM portal in the year 2017.
- NLC India Limited's growth in GeM procurement started from a small value of Rs 2.21 crore during the year 2018-19 and the company has registered an impressive growth of Rs 984.93 crore during the year FY 2022-23. Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is a dedicated e-Market

- service platform, a National public procurement portal, governed by Government of India for marketing different goods and services.
- To promote the power market in line with GEM's vision of transparent, inclusive and efficient public procurement in India, awards are being presented by the Government of India.

British National Award for director Shekhar Kapur

- Noted film director Shekhar Kapur has been presented with the British National Award for Best Director for 'What's Love Got To Do With It'.
- At the award ceremony, the film 'What's Love Got To Do With It' was nominated in nine categories, out of which the film won four. Apart from Best Director, the film was also awarded Best British Film, Best Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor. Shekhar Kapur is best known for directing films ranging from Bandit Queen, Mr. India to Elizabeth.
- Shekhar's international career His film Elizabeth, which came in 1998, was given the Oscar Award in the Best Make-up category. Its sequel Elizabeth - The Golden Age, which came in the year 2007, won the Oscar Award in the Best Costume Design category. Currently Shekhar is in news for the sequel of his classic Hindi film Masoom. What's Love Got To Do With It is a British romantic comedy, released in the UK as well as the US and India. The film stars Lily James, Shazad Latif, Shabana Azmi, Emma Thompson, Sajal Ali, Oliver Chris and Asim Chowdhary in lead roles.

Mary Kom Named Global Indian Icon at UK-India Awards

- Boxing champion Mary Kom received the esteemed Global Indian Icon of the Year award at the prestigious UK-India Awards held in Windsor, located in south-eastern England.
- In a memorable gala ceremony on Thursday night, the 40-year-old legendary athlete, who also served as a member of the Rajya Sabha, shared her remarkable 20-year journey filled with dedication and unwavering commitment to the sport of boxing.
- She graciously accepted the award from the Indian High Commissioner to the UK, Vikram Doraiswami, expressing her gratitude and reflecting on the tremendous sacrifices she has made in pursuit of her boxing career.
- The awards, now in their fifth year, recognise outstanding contributions of leaders in business, professional services, government, culture and social impact, highlighting their remarkable achievements in strengthening bilateral ties.

RANKING

India is ranked 80th with visa-free entry to 57 nations, as per the Henley Passport Index 2023

- India has significantly improved its passport ranking by rising 5 spots from last years and is now ranked 80th in the latest Henley Passport Index. Owing to this, Indians can travel to 57 destinations completely visa free or visas on arrival arrangements.
- However, it is to be noted here that India has scored poorly in mobility. Hence, Indian passport holders need a visa to enter 177 destinations across the world in countries like China, Japan, Russia, the United States, and the entire European Union.
- As per the report, Singapore has replaced Japan for having the world's most powerful passport, allowing visa-free entry to 192 global destinations, according to the latest Henley Passport Index.
- After five years at the top, Japan dropped to third place as the number of destinations its passport can access without a visa fell, according to the ranking published by London-based immigration consultancy Henley & Partners.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Union Minister Amit Shah unveils book 'Memories Never Die'

- Union Minister Amit Shah unveiled the book 'Memories Never Die,' a tribute to the life and legacy of the late former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam during his two-day visit to the Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu, The book was co-authored by Dr. APJM Nasima Maraikayar and scientist Dr. Y. S. Rajan. The event was graced by the presence of Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Shri. L Murugan, and Tamil Nadu BJP President, Shri. Annamalai.
- In his address, Shri Amit Shah said that with the release of the book 'Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam: Memories Never Die', readers across the country will definitely get an opportunity to know, understand and follow Dr. Kalam. He said that this book assimilates the history of Indian rocketry, science, technology and innovation, beautiful representation of Indian politics and administrative system and description of many incidents related to wishes and imagination of Dr. Kalam. In this book there is a complete and honest description of the incidents related to Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.
- About; APJ Abdul Kalam - Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam BR was an Indian aerospace scientist and statesman who served as the 11th president of India from 2002 to 2007. He was born and raised in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu and studied physics and aerospace engineering.

Former VP Naidu Releases Book Titled "As the Wheel Turns"

- India's former Vice President, released a book titled "As the Wheel Turns" on Thursday.
- Following the release of the book, Naidu stated, "The book is very useful for the young generation to know about the great people of India. I feel it's an honour

to participate in the event and release the book.” He also mentioned how vital humour and grammar are for everyone.

- Humour and grammar are more important for everyone. India is now moving forward and creating importance across the world and making us all proud, – He said.

Vinod Mankara’s new book released from the rocket launchpad at Satish Dhawan Space Centre

- Vinod Mankara, a national award-winning filmmaker-writer, launched his new book from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC) here. The SDSC-SHAR hosted the one-of-a-kind premiere of ‘Prism: The Ancestral Abode of Rainbow,’ a compilation of science essays, on Thursday evening, as preparations for the country’s much-anticipated Moon mission Chandrayaan-3 were in full swing.
- While the countdown for the historic launch was underway at the space centre, ISRO Chairman S Somanath handed over the book to Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) Director S Unnikrishnan Nair. Besides Lipi Publications managing director Lipi Akbar, the book’s publisher, SDSC-SHAR Director A Rajarajan, Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) director V Narayanan, former ISRO Director K Radhakrishnan, and many other space experts were present during the function.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

India and ADB sign \$295 million loan to upgrade state highways in Bihar

- The Indian government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have joined hands once again to enhance infrastructure in Bihar. Through a \$295-million loan, the project aims to upgrade approximately 265 km of state highways in Bihar, incorporating climate and disaster-resilient designs and road safety measures.
- The initiative aligns with the Bihar government’s vision to improve all state highways to standard two-lane widths and prioritize road safety. Additionally, the upgraded roads are expected to boost connectivity in impoverished rural regions, improving access to essential services like health, education, and markets, ultimately enhancing the well-being of the people.

Union Bank of India partners with IBM for holistic digital transformation

- In a groundbreaking move towards a customer-centric banking experience, Union Bank of India has joined forces with IBM India Pvt Ltd to embark on a comprehensive digital transformation. This strategic partnership signifies a significant milestone in the evolution of the bank and promises to revolutionize the way customers interact with their financial services.
- The primary objective of this collaboration is to establish a state-of-the-art Digital Business Platform that caters to the ever-evolving needs of modern-day banking. By embracing the power of cutting-edge technology, Union Bank of India aims to provide its customers with seamless and efficient banking experiences. This forward-thinking approach focuses on three key elements:

omni-channel experiences, data-driven hyper-personalization, and a comprehensive financial services superstore.

IMF raises India's 2023 GDP growth forecast to 6.1%

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday revised India's GDP growth forecast to 6.1% for 2023, up from 5.9% projected by the financial institution earlier this year as a result of stronger domestic investment.
- However, the IMF kept the growth forecast for 2024 at 6.3%, the growth rate it had predicted in April. IMF is not the only international financial agency to review the growth forecast for India.
- Earlier in June, Fitch Ratings raised its FY24 (2023-24) growth forecast for the Indian economy to 6.3%, from 6% predicted earlier, citing strong growth in the April-June quarter so far and sustained near-term momentum.

Ashok Leyland bags orders worth Rs 800 crore from Indian Army

- Ashok Leyland, the Indian flagship of the Hinduja Group and the largest supplier of logistics vehicles to the Indian military, announced on Monday that it had won major orders for defence vehicles, valued at Rs 800 crore
- The contracts awarded to Ashok Leyland include for the production of "field artillery tractors" (FAT 4x4) and "gun towing vehicles" (GTV 6x6). The FAT 4x4 and GTV 6x6 are specialized vehicles employed by the artillery for towing light and medium guns, respectively.
- Both these platforms featured prominently in the first "positive indigenization list" that the government promulgated in August 2020. This was followed in May 2021 by a second positive indigenisation list, comprising of 108 items; and then a third indigenisation List of 101 items in April 2022.
- Ashok Leyland vehicles, especially the 7.5 tonne Stallion, have formed the backbone of the army's logistics supply chain since the Kargil conflict in 1999. They are manufactured for the military in a dedicated production line in Ordnance Factory Jabalpur. The budget component for military transportation this year allocates Rs 6,717 crore for revenue expenditure. In addition the budget caters for Rs 4,038 crore in capital expenditure.

HDFC Bank becomes first bank to offers interoperability of UPI and CBDC QR code payments

- HDFC Bank – the country's largest private sector lender –to implement interoperability between United Payment Interface and Central Bank Digital Currency, The lender has registered over 1 lakh customers and 1.7 lakh merchants under CBDC pilot programme.
- HDFC Bank customers can now transact money available in their CBDC wallet across UPI QR code and there will be no need to scan different QR codes at the same merchant.
- Merchants, on the other hand, only need to display one QR code at the storefront or through the acquiring bank's mobile application. There is no need for merchants to change their existing QR codes

- HDFC Bank will facilitate payments in Digital Rupee across several cities including Mumbai, Delhi, Chandigarh, Bhubaneshwar, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Guwahati, Gangtok, among others.

Travel credit card launched by IDFC FIRST Bank, Club Vistara, & Mastercard

- IDFC FIRST Bank, Club Vistara, and Mastercard together have introduced a travel credit card that aims to enhance travel experiences for cardholders. The aim of the partnership and travel card is to provide solutions tailored specifically for frequent flyers and travel enthusiasts, while also ensuring security.
- The card combines banking services with various travel perks including access to airport lounges, complimentary flight tickets, accelerated reward points, and cover for cancelled flight & hotel bookings among other features.
- This card will redefine the way people travel, offering a range of exclusive benefits and rewards that cater to the diverse needs of modern travellers. We are confident in this partnership's
- ability to deliver unmatched value and elevate the travel experience for our esteemed customers.
- As consumers take advantage of a more traditional travel ecosystem in 2023, prioritising leisure travel and pioneering new corridors around the world, Mastercard is thrilled to introduce a specially designed credit card for travel enthusiasts in collaboration with IDFC FIRST Bank and Club Vistara,

Max Life partners with DCB Bank to offer comprehensive range of life insurance solutions

- Max Life Insurance Company announced its partnership with DCB Bank. Through this collaboration, Max Life and DCB Bank will provide life insurance products to the bank's customers, including term, savings, and retirement plans, allowing them to protect their financial future and expand their investment portfolio. The partnership aims to leverage DCB Bank's extensive reach and customer-centric approach, along with Max Life's expertise in protection and long-term savings solutions. By combining their strengths, the two organizations aim to deliver superior customer experience, digital servicing, and an omni-channel approach.
- About Max Life Insurance - Max Life Insurance Company Limited is a joint venture between Max Financial Services Limited and Axis Bank Limited. It offers comprehensive protection and long-term savings life insurance solutions. Max Life operates through multiple distribution channels, including agency and third-party partners. The company has achieved a gross written premium of INR 25,342 Cr for FY2022-23. It is a prominent player in the insurance sector, known for its expertise and customer-centric approach.
- About DCB Bank - DCB Bank is a new-generation private sector bank with 427 branches across India. It is regulated by the Reserve Bank of India and is professionally managed. The bank provides contemporary technology infrastructure, including internet and mobile banking services.

PNB Launches UPI Payments With IVR-Based UPI 123PAY

- State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) has announced the launch of UPI 123PAY, an IVR-based UPI solution. This offering is in line with the Digital Payment Vision 2025, aiming to propel India towards a cashless and cardless society.
- The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has revolutionized the way transactions are conducted in India, offering customers a seamless, secure, and real-time payment experience. However, until now, UPI services were primarily accessible through smartphones or USSD, relying on robust internet connectivity.
- PNB recognized that this limitation prevented users without smartphones or residing in low internet connectivity zones from accessing UPI services.

Bank of India rolls out Mahila Samman Savings Certificate

- State-run Bank of India launched the Mahila Samman Savings Certificate scheme at all its branches. The Mahila Samman Savings Certificate is a government-guaranteed limited-period small savings scheme aimed at empowering women and fostering their financial inclusion,
- The scheme was announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during her Budget speech this year. The scheme offers an interest rate of 7.5 per cent per annum, compounded quarterly.
- Under the scheme, individual girls or women can open a Mahila Samman Savings Certificate, or a guardian can open an account on behalf of a minor girl.
- The account will mature after two years from the date of opening. Accounts under this scheme can be opened until March 31, 2025.

IDFC First Bank to Merge with IDFC Ltd in 155:100 Share Exchange Ratio

- IDFC First Bank and IDFC Ltd have announced their merger plans, with a share exchange ratio of 155 equity shares of IDFC First Bank for every 100 equity shares of IDFC. The merger aims to simplify the corporate structure, increase the book value per share, and streamline regulatory compliances. The merger is expected to be completed in the current financial year, subject to unforeseen circumstances.
- In March 2023, IDFC Ltd and IDFC Financial Holding Company Ltd appointed Axis Capital Ltd to determine the fairness of the share exchange ratio for the merger. The companies have completed all stages of corporate simplifications, with the amalgamation with IDFC First Bank being the next step. To facilitate the merger, registered valuers and legal experts were appointed to provide recommendations and conduct due diligence.
- The merger is expected to increase the book value per share of IDFC First Bank by 4.9 percent, based on audited financials as of March 31, 2023. It will consolidate IDFC FHCL, IDFC Limited, and IDFC First Bank into a single entity, simplifying the corporate structure. Additionally, the merger will result in a diversified shareholder base, similar to other large private sector banks, with no promoter holding.

HDFC Bank and HDFC Ltd merge to form a powerhouse financial organization

- On July 1, the largest private bank in India and the mortgage industry, HDFC Bank, will combine to form a new company with a market value of ₹14.37 lakh crore. In a period of consistent expansion for the Indian economy, the merger will be advantageous to both shareholders and customers.
- By combining their strengths, HDFC Bank and HDFC will become a stronger financial organisation. The objective is to better meet client needs and adjust to changes in the industry. Synergies between HDFC Bank's banking system and its client base in housing finance will result from the merger.
- The combination of banking services and housing finance options will probably result in the creation of novel goods and services catered to the requirements of homebuyers.
- Notably, around 70% of HDFC Bank's customers don't have an account with the bank. In contrast, only 2% of HDFC Bank's clients owned an HDFC product. This gives the combined company enormous potential for cross-selling its goods and services, enabling it to grow.

Indian Bank Collaborates with NESL for Project Wave, Unveiling Digital Services

- Public sector lender Indian Bank has unveiled new services under its digital transformation initiative — Project WAVE. Accordingly, the city-headquartered bank in collaboration with National E-Governance Services Ltd, has introduced an electronic bank guarantee (e-BG) service to ease traditional paper-based processes.
- This move will also reduce the turn-around time of the bank guarantee issuance and delivery to the beneficiary from an industry average of 3-4 working days to a few minutes. Besides, the facility would replace the need for physical stamp paper and physical signatures of customers by replacing them with digital stamping and e-signing making the entire process digital.
- At an event held in Chennai recently, the bank's Managing Director and CEO S L Jain launched the digital services in the presence of senior executives.

World Bank Approves \$1.5 Billion in Financing to Support India's Low-Carbon Transition

- The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors today approved \$1.5 billion in financing to accelerate India's development of low-carbon energy. The financing will help India promote low-carbon energy by scaling up renewable energy, developing green hydrogen, and stimulating climate finance for low-carbon energy investments.
- India is one of the fastest-growing large economies in the world. While the country's energy consumption per capita is only one-third of the global average, India's energy demand is expected to grow rapidly as the economy expands. This calls for a phasing down of fossil-based energy sources in line with India's goal of achieving net-zero by 2070.

- The industrial sector is the main driver for future growth of energy demand and emissions, and green hydrogen can play a critical role in initially decarbonizing the hard-to-abate industrial sectors, such as fertilizer and refinery industries, and later heavy industries, including iron and steel. India has achieved impressive progress in renewable energy installed capacity and a decline in costs. Scaling up the production of renewable energy will accelerate the transition to low-carbon electricity and support the emergence and expansion of the green hydrogen sector.

Kotak Bank partners with NPCI to offer RuPay Credit Cards with UPI

- Kotak Mahindra Bank, in collaboration with National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has introduced the facility of linking its RuPay Credit Card to UPI (Unified Payments Interface) apps. Customers are no longer needed to carry their physical credit card.
- Customers of Kotak Mahindra Bank can transact through UPI apps like Google Pay, PhonePay, and Paytm, following the linkage. They can choose from seven RuPay credit cards and scan QR codes or initiate transaction on POS (Point of Sale) throughout the country.
- Kotak RuPay Credit Card-UPI linkage will also provide customers with rewards and an interest-free credit period of up to 50 days