Weekly Current Affairs 11th October to 17th October 2026

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IMPORTANT ONE LINERS

NATIONAL

UN human rights body expresses concern over Delhi detentions, urges immediate release

In the News: The UN Human Rights Office expressed concern over mass detentions in Delhi during protests organised by the Cockroach Janta Party. The detentions reportedly included civil society members, lawyers, journalists and protesters. India rejected the UN remarks and described them as unwarranted interference in its internal affairs.

Key Points:

- **UN Concern:** The UN Human Rights Office raised concern over large-scale detentions during the Delhi protest. It called for the immediate and unconditional release of detained protesters. The issue brought attention to civil liberties, public order and protest rights.
- **CJP Protest Context:** The protest was linked to the Cockroach Janta Party, a youth-led protest movement. This protest demanded the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. Delhi Police had refused permission for the protest, and heavy security and roadblocks kept most demonstrators from reaching Jantar Mantar.
- **India's Response:** India rejected the UN statement and called it unwarranted interference. The Ministry of External Affairs maintained that India's democratic institutions and law-enforcement processes function under the Constitution and domestic law.
- **Right to Protest:** The right to peaceful protest flows from Article 19(1)(a) and Article 19(1)(b) of the Constitution. These protect freedom of speech and peaceful assembly. However, the rights are subject to reasonable restrictions relating to public order, sovereignty and security.

Andhra Pradesh Launches Adavi Thalli Baata 2.0 Road Project

In the News: Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan launched Adavi Thalli Baata 2.0 to improve road connectivity in tribal areas. The programme involves development works worth about ₹2,052 crore. It aims to connect 1,341 tribal settlements through roads, bridges and related infrastructure.

Key Points:

- **About the Project:** Adavi Thalli Baata 2.0 is a tribal-area connectivity programme of Andhra Pradesh. It focuses on road development in remote habitations where access to transport, healthcare, education and markets remains limited.
- **Project Outlay:** The second phase involves development works worth around ₹2,052 crore. The programme includes more than 2,500 development works. It is one of the major tribal-infrastructure initiatives announced by the state government.
- **Road and Bridge Works:** The project will lay about 1,976 km of roads and construct 45 bridges. These works will cover 1,341 tribal settlements. The aim is to reduce isolation of forest and hill villages.
- **Digital Connectivity Link:** The government has also obtained clearances for road works, mobile towers and optical-fibre cable laying in selected locations. This combines physical connectivity with digital access in tribal regions.
- **Development Significance:** Better roads can improve ambulance access, school attendance, public-service delivery and agricultural marketing. The project is important for tribal welfare, last-mile governance and rural infrastructure planning.

Tukaram Mundhe Appointed Secretary of Committee to Overhaul Maharashtra PSC

In the News: The Maharashtra government appointed senior IAS officer Tukaram Mundhe as Secretary of a high-level committee constituted to examine alleged irregularities in Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC) examinations. The committee will investigate recruitment-related concerns and recommend measures to improve transparency and accountability in the examination system.

Key Points:

- **Committee Leadership:** The committee is headed by retired Justice Dilip Bhosale, with Tukaram Mundhe serving as its Secretary. It also includes former judge P. D. Naik, Inspector General Lakhmi Gautam and retired officer Ganesh Patil.
- **Committee Mandate:** It will identify administrative shortcomings and suggest reforms to prevent question paper leaks and strengthen recruitment procedures.
- **About Tukaram Mundhe:** Tukaram Mundhe is a Maharashtra-cadre IAS officer known for administrative reforms and anti-corruption initiatives. He was serving as Commissioner of the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration when assigned this additional responsibility.
- **Constitutional Provisions:** The Maharashtra Public Service Commission is a constitutional body established under Article 315 of the Indian Constitution. Article 320 defines the functions of Public Service Commissions, while Article 316 deals with the appointment and tenure of their members.

Prakash Rajpurohit Appointed Deputy Election Commissioner: Tenure Until April 2030

In the News: The Central Government appointed senior IAS officer Prakash Rajpurohit as Deputy Election Commissioner in the Election Commission of India (ECI). The appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) as part of a bureaucratic reshuffle. His tenure will continue until April 8, 2030.

Key Points:

- **Appointment Details:** Prakash Rajpurohit is a 2010-batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre.
- **Appointment Authority:** His appointment was approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), which approves several senior-level government appointments. He succeeds Sanjay Kumar, who was repatriated to his parent cadre in August 2026.
- **About Election Commission:** The Election Commission of India was established on January 25, 1950, under Article 324 of the Constitution. It conducts elections to Parliament, State Legislatures and the offices of the President and Vice-President of India.
- **Tenure and Removal:** Under the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners Act, 2023, Election Commissioners serve for six years or until attaining 65 years of age, whichever is earlier. The Chief Election Commissioner enjoys removal safeguards similar to those of a Supreme Court judge.

President Droupadi Murmu Appoints Six Governors in Major State-Level Reshuffle

In the News: President Droupadi Murmu appointed Governors for six states in a major state-level reshuffle. The appointments were announced by Rashtrapati Bhavan on October 12, 2026. The changes cover Keralam, Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Karnataka, Uttarakhand and Sikkim.

Key Points:

- **Appointments:** Both were transfers. Sikkim Governor Om Prakash Mathur moved to Keralam, and Keralam Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar moved to Tamil Nadu.
- **Other Governor Appointments:** Dr Sudha Yadav was appointed Governor of Karnataka and Dr Dhal Singh Bisen was appointed Governor of Uttarakhand. Dushyant Gautam was appointed Governor of Sikkim.
- **Constitutional Position:** The Governor is the constitutional head of a state. Under Article 155, the Governor is appointed by the President by warrant under her hand and seal.
- **Tenure and Role:** Under Article 156, a Governor holds office during the pleasure of the President. The Governor performs constitutional, executive and discretionary functions under the Indian Constitution.

Lakshadweep Attains 100% Literacy Status

In the News: Lakshadweep was declared a Union Territory that has achieved total literacy. The announcement was made by Administrator Praful Patel at a function held in Kavaratti. The milestone was achieved under the ULLAS – Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram.

Key Points:

- **Total Literacy Declaration:** Lakshadweep has been declared a fully literate Union Territory. The announcement marks the completion of special literacy campaigns and learner assessments across the islands.

- **ULLAS Scheme:** The achievement was made under ULLAS – Nav Bharat Saksharta Karyakram. It is a centrally supported adult education programme focused on foundational literacy and numeracy.
- **Learner Assessment:** All eligible learners successfully passed the literacy assessment examination. The assessment ensured that adult learners acquired basic reading, writing and numeracy skills.
- **Administrative Context:** Lakshadweep is a Union Territory administered by an Administrator appointed by the President. Kavaratti is its capital and was the venue of the literacy declaration event.

Delhi Protests: Balancing Right to Protest with Public Order

In the News: Delhi witnessed debate over protest restrictions after demonstrations demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The restrictions included prohibitory orders, detentions, barricades and transport-related curbs. The issue has revived discussion on the balance between peaceful protest and public order.

Key Points:

- **Constitutional Right:** The right to protest flows from Article 19(1)(a), which protects freedom of speech and expression. It is also linked with Article 19(1)(b), which protects peaceful and unarmed assembly.
- **Reasonable Restrictions:** The right to protest is not absolute. Articles 19(2) and 19(3) allow reasonable restrictions in the interests of public order, sovereignty, security and other constitutional grounds.
- **Police Regulation:** Police may regulate protests through permission systems, route controls, crowd limits and security conditions. However, regulation should not become a blanket prohibition on peaceful democratic expression.
- **Public Order Concern:** Authorities cited security, crowd control and sensitive locations while imposing restrictions in Delhi. Preventive action may be taken where there is a real and imminent risk of disorder.
- **Judicial Balance:** The Supreme Court has held that public streets have competing uses and protests can be regulated. At the same time, restrictions must be proportionate and should preserve the core right to peaceful assembly.

India Inaugurates Largest Phenol and Acetone Plant in Haldia

In the News: West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari inaugurated India's largest integrated phenol and acetone manufacturing plant at Haldia, West Bengal. Developed by Adperma Private Limited, a subsidiary of Haldia Petrochemicals Limited (HPL), the facility involves an investment of approximately ₹6,000 crore. The project aims to strengthen domestic chemical production and reduce dependence on imports.

Key Points:

- **Project Developer and Location:** The manufacturing facility has been developed by Adperma Private Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Haldia Petrochemicals Limited. It is located at Haldia, a major industrial and port centre in West Bengal's Purba Medinipur district.
- **Production Capacity:** The integrated facility has an annual production capacity of approximately 3.45 lakh tonnes of phenol and 2.15 lakh tonnes of acetone. It is among India's largest facilities for producing these important industrial chemicals.
- **Industrial Applications:** Phenol is used in manufacturing resins, adhesives, engineering plastics and pharmaceuticals. Acetone is widely used as an industrial solvent and as a raw material in producing plastics, chemicals and pharmaceutical products.
- **Manufacturing Technology:** The plant is integrated with HPL's existing petrochemical complex and uses benzene and propylene as key feedstocks. The facility strengthens domestic production across the phenolics value chain.

India Adds Sukhna Wetland and Sauj Jheel to Ramsar List

In the News: Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav announced the inclusion of Sukhna Wetland in Chandigarh and Sauj Jheel in Uttar Pradesh in the Ramsar List. With these additions, India's total number of Ramsar Sites has increased to 103. The recognition highlights the ecological significance of these wetlands and their role in biodiversity conservation.

Key Points:

- **Sukhna Wetland:** Located in Chandigarh at the foothills of the Outer Himalayas, Sukhna Wetland is designated as Ramsar Site No. 2602. It supports resident and migratory waterbirds along the Central Asian Flyway, including the vulnerable common pochard and endangered Pallas's fish eagle.

- **Sauj Jheel:** Situated in Uttar Pradesh within the Ganga River floodplain, Sauj Jheel has been designated as Ramsar Site No. 2603. It supports more than 30,000 waterbirds regularly and provides habitat for the vulnerable sarus crane and greater spotted eagle. It is also recognised as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area.
- **Ramsar Convention:** The Ramsar Convention is an international treaty adopted on February 2, 1971, in Ramsar, Iran, for the conservation and wise use of wetlands. It entered into force in 1975, while India became a contracting party on February 1, 1982.
- **Wetland Conservation Framework:** The Ramsar Convention promotes the wise use of wetlands through conservation and sustainable management. In India, the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2017, provide a regulatory framework for notified wetlands under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- **World Wetlands Day:** World Wetlands Day is observed annually on February 2 to commemorate the adoption of the Ramsar Convention. Wetlands perform ecological functions such as groundwater recharge, flood regulation, carbon storage and the conservation of aquatic biodiversity.

India's First Cyber Trojan Horse Unveiled in Kochi

In the News: A large Cyber Trojan Horse installation made from electronic waste was unveiled at the c0c0n 2026 cybersecurity conference in Kochi, Kerala. Created by artist Davinci Suresh, the installation aimed to raise awareness about cyber threats, online child exploitation and digital safety. The project combined cybersecurity education with sustainable electronic-waste management.

Key Points:

- **Cyber Trojan Horse Installation:** The 25-foot-tall sculpture was created by Kerala-based artist Davinci Suresh using approximately 850 kg of discarded electronic materials. The installation weighs more than two tonnes and incorporates keyboards, circuit boards, processors, cables and other electronic components.
- **c0c0 2026 Conference:** The installation was showcased at the 19th edition of c0c0n, an international cybersecurity and hacking conference held in Kochi. The event was organised under the leadership of Kerala Police Cyberdome and the Information Security Research Association to promote cybersecurity awareness and cooperation.
- **Kerala Police Cyberdome:** Cyberdome is a public-private cybersecurity initiative of Kerala Police that facilitates cooperation among law enforcement agencies, cybersecurity experts and technology organisations. It focuses on cybercrime prevention, digital investigations, threat intelligence and capacity building.
- **Trojan Horse Malware:** A Trojan Horse is malicious software that disguises itself as a legitimate or useful program to deceive users. Unlike a computer virus, a Trojan does not necessarily replicate itself. It can facilitate data theft, unauthorised access, surveillance and the installation of other malicious programs.
- **E-Waste Management Framework:** India's E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2022, came into force on April 1, 2023, replacing the earlier 2016 rules. They establish an Extended Producer Responsibility framework for electronic-waste recycling and management, with the Central Pollution Control Board playing an important regulatory role.

Imran Khan asked to leave India: What powers does govt have over OCI cardholders?

In the News: Bollywood actor Imran Khan, a US citizen and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholder, was asked by the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) to leave India by October 28, 2026. The notice followed his participation in a protest at August Kranti Maidan, Mumbai, on October 10. The incident has raised questions about the legal rights of OCI cardholders and the government's powers under immigration laws.

Key Points:

- **About OCI Status:** The Overseas Citizen of India scheme was introduced in 2005 under the Citizenship Act, 1955. OCI cardholders are foreign nationals of Indian origin who receive a lifelong multiple-entry visa and permission to reside and work in India. OCI status does not constitute Indian citizenship or dual citizenship.
- **Reason for the Notice:** Imran Khan participated in a protest demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The FRRO issued a Leave India Notice following a complaint concerning his participation as a foreign national. The notice requires him to leave India by October 28, 2026.
- **Government's Legal Powers:** Sections 7(2)(c) and 29 of the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, empower authorities to regulate the stay and removal of foreign nationals under specified conditions. The Act does not expressly

prohibit foreigners from attending political protests. However, it authorises restrictions on their presence and activities in India.

- **Rights and Restrictions:** Under Section 7B of the Citizenship Act, OCI cardholders do not enjoy political rights such as voting or contesting elections. Article 19(1)(a) and Article 19(1)(b), which guarantee freedom of speech and peaceful assembly, apply specifically to Indian citizens. OCI holders remain subject to immigration regulations.
- **Cancellation and Judicial Remedies:** Section 7D of the Citizenship Act provides grounds for cancelling OCI registration, including specified security and public-interest concerns. A reasonable opportunity of being heard is required before cancellation. Affected individuals may challenge immigration directions before a High Court under Article 226 of the Constitution.

Mizoram Farmer Mari ZT Lalrithangi Receives FAO Honour for Strawberry Farming Success

In the News: Mari ZT Lalrithangi, a strawberry farmer from Mizoram, was honoured by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) under its 100 Women Heroes in Agrifood Systems and Rural Development initiative. The recognition was presented at the World Food Forum in Rome on October 15, 2026. She became the first Mizo woman to receive this recognition for her contribution to sustainable farming and rural livelihoods.

Key Points:

- **About the Awardee:** ZT Lalrithangi, popularly known as Mari-i, is a former teacher from Sangau village in Lawngtlai district, Mizoram. She developed a successful strawberry farming enterprise and became an example of women-led horticultural entrepreneurship in the northeastern region.
- **FAO Recognition:** She was selected under the FAO's 100 Women Heroes in Agrifood Systems and Rural Development initiative. More than 600 candidates from 131 countries were nominated for the recognition. The initiative forms part of the International Year of the Woman Farmer 2026.
- **Integrated Farming Model:** Lalrithangi operates a two hectare combining strawberry cultivation, fish farming and poultry production. This integrated approach improves resource utilisation and provides multiple sources of income. Her enterprise generates approximately ₹6–10 lakh annually.
- **Other Indian Awardee:** Priyanka Mahesh Shelke from Maharashtra was the second Indian woman recognised under the initiative. The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare had nominated 20 Indian women. The recognition highlights contributions to sustainable agriculture, women's entrepreneurship and rural development.
- **Other Achievements:** Lalrithangi received recognition as the Best Horticulture Farmer of Lawngtlai district for 2025–26. She also mentors other farmers and supports rural employment. Her work includes plans for value-added strawberry products, particularly juice processing.

President Murmu Accepts L. Murugan's Resignation: Article 75(2) Explained

In the News: President Droupadi Murmu accepted the resignation of Dr L. Murugan from the Union Council of Ministers on October 15, 2026. The resignation was accepted with immediate effect on the advice of Prime Minister Narendra Modi under Article 75(2) of the Constitution. Murugan stepped down from his ministerial responsibilities to concentrate on political activities in Tamil Nadu.

Key Points:

- **About L. Murugan:** Dr L. Murugan served as Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs. He represented Madhya Pradesh in the Rajya Sabha and had been associated with the Bharatiya Janata Party's organisational activities in Tamil Nadu.
- **Article 75(2):** Article 75(2) states that Union Ministers hold office during the pleasure of the President. In India's parliamentary system, the President ordinarily acts on the advice of the Prime Minister in matters concerning the appointment and removal of ministers.
- **Appointment of Ministers:** Under Article 75(1), the Prime Minister is appointed by the President, while other Union Ministers are appointed by the President on the Prime Minister's advice. This provision establishes the constitutional procedure for constituting the Union Council of Ministers.
- **Collective Responsibility:** Article 75(3) provides that the Union Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. Article 75(5) requires a minister who is not a member of either House of Parliament for six consecutive months to cease being a minister.

- **Resignation Background:** Murugan also announced his resignation from the Rajya Sabha to focus on organisational responsibilities in Tamil Nadu. His parliamentary tenure had otherwise extended to 2030. The presidential communiqué specifically confirmed acceptance of his resignation from the Union Council of Ministers.

Supreme Court Rules That Religious Conversion Does Not Automatically Preserve Backward Class Reservation

In the News: The Supreme Court ruled that a person converting from Hinduism to Islam cannot automatically claim reservation benefits based on their earlier caste status. A bench of Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Shree Chandrashekhar upheld the Madras High Court's judgment concerning Backward Class Muslim reservation in Tamil Nadu. The ruling clarified the constitutional requirements governing reservation eligibility after religious conversion.

Key Points:

- **Supreme Court's Ruling:** The Court held that social backwardness associated with a person's earlier caste status cannot automatically establish membership in a backward-class community after conversion. Eligibility must be determined according to the applicable constitutional and statutory requirements.
- **Background of the Case:** The case involved Sameer Ahamed, who converted from Hinduism to Islam and sought a Backward Class Muslim community certificate under the Muslim Labbai category. The dispute arose after the authorities rejected his application. The Madras High Court subsequently examined the legality of the Tamil Nadu government's reservation-related order.
- **Constitutional Provisions:** Article 16(4) permits reservation in public employment for backward classes that are inadequately represented in government services. Article 341 deals with the identification of Scheduled Castes. Under the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, Scheduled Caste status is restricted to persons professing Hinduism, Sikhism or Buddhism.
- **Government Order Invalidated:** The Supreme Court upheld the Madras High Court's decision invalidating Tamil Nadu Government Order No. 31, dated March 9, 2024. The order provided a mechanism for issuing Backward Class Muslim certificates to certain converts. The Court held that religious conversion alone cannot establish membership in a notified backward-class community.
- **Reconversion and Reservation:** The Court clarified that reconversion to Hinduism does not automatically restore an individual's earlier reservation status. The competent authority must independently examine whether the original caste or social identity has genuinely been restored. Eligibility must satisfy the relevant legal conditions.

Ladakh Adds Sankoo as Its Eighth District

In the News: The Ladakh administration officially notified the creation of Sankoo as the Union Territory's eighth district on October 16, 2026. The decision was approved under the administration of Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena. Sankoo was carved out of Kargil district to strengthen administrative accessibility, decentralised governance and public service delivery.

Key Points:

- **Creation of Sankoo District:** Sankoo became Ladakh's eighth district, with Sankoo designated as its district headquarters. The Revenue Department issued Notification S.O. 284 on October 16, 2026. The notification was issued under Section 5 of the Jammu and Kashmir Land Revenue Act, 1996, as applicable to Ladakh.
- **Administrative Composition:** The newly formed Sankoo district comprises four tehsils: Sankoo, GM Pore, TSG and Taisuru. These areas were separated from the existing Kargil district. The reorganisation modifies Kargil's administrative jurisdiction and brings local administration closer to remote settlements.
- **Earlier District Expansion:** Ladakh originally had two districts, Leh and Kargil. Five additional districts, namely Sham, Nubra, Changthang, Zanskar and Drass, were notified on April 27, 2026. Their creation increased the total to seven before Sankoo became the eighth district.
- **Ladakh's Administrative Status:** Ladakh became a separate Union Territory on October 31, 2019, following the reorganisation of the former state of Jammu and Kashmir. It is administered by a Lieutenant Governor and does not have a Legislative Assembly. The Union Territory falls under the administrative responsibility of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **Additional Administrative Measures:** Alongside Sankoo's creation, the administration announced five new tehsils to strengthen local governance. The reorganisation aims to improve access to revenue administration, public services and development programmes. It also addresses administrative challenges arising from Ladakh's difficult terrain and dispersed population.

21 Years of the Right to Information Act, 2005

In the News: India marked 21 years of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005, on October 12, 2026. The legislation provides Indian citizens with a statutory mechanism to obtain information from public authorities. The anniversary also highlighted concerns over the increasing pendency of appeals and complaints before information commissions.

Key Points:

- **About the RTI Act:** The Right to Information Act, 2005, came fully into force on October 12, 2005. It enables Indian citizens to seek information from public authorities, promoting transparency and accountability in governance. The right to information is closely associated with freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a).
- **Important Provisions:** Section 6 deals with requests for information, while Section 7 prescribes a general response period of 30 days. Information concerning the life or liberty of a person must be supplied within 48 hours. Section 8 specifies exemptions from disclosure, subject to statutory conditions.
- **Information Commissions:** The Act established the Central Information Commission (CIC) and State Information Commissions to handle appeals and complaints. Section 19 provides for appeals, while Section 20 deals with penalties for specified violations by Public Information Officers. The CIC was constituted on October 12, 2005.
- **Pendency of RTI Cases:** According to the 2025–26 report by Satark Nagrik Sangathan, approximately 3.85 lakh appeals and complaints were pending across 28 information commissions as of June 30, 2026. The report highlighted delays in disposing of cases and procedural difficulties faced by applicants.

Smriti Mandhana Named UNICEF India Celebrity Advocate

In the News: UNICEF India appointed Indian cricketer Smriti Mandhana as its Celebrity Advocate on October 11, 2026, marking the International Day of the Girl Child. The Indian women's cricket team captain will support initiatives promoting children's rights, adolescent girls' empowerment, health and well-being. The appointment recognises her influence as a leading international sportsperson.

Key Points:

- **New Appointment:** Smriti Mandhana was appointed UNICEF India Celebrity Advocate to promote equal opportunities for children and young people. Her responsibilities include raising awareness about girls' rights, education, health, protection and leadership. The announcement coincided with the International Day of the Girl Child.
- **Focus on Girls' Empowerment:** Mandhana will support UNICEF India's programmes encouraging adolescent girls to pursue education, sports and leadership opportunities. The initiative addresses barriers affecting girls' participation and development. It also promotes equal opportunities for children from different social and economic backgrounds.
- **Cricket Achievements:** Mandhana is an Arjuna Award recipient and a two-time ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year. She was part of India's victorious 2025 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup team. In 2025, she also became the first woman to score more than 1,000 ODI runs in a calendar year.
- **Previous UNICEF Association:** Mandhana has previously supported UNICEF-ICC campaigns promoting gender equality and life skills. She has also participated in UNICEF's Promise to Children campaign. Her new appointment expands her involvement in initiatives concerning children's welfare.
- **About UNICEF:** The United Nations Children's Fund was established on December 11, 1946, and is headquartered in New York, United States. It works to protect children's rights and improve access to healthcare, nutrition, education, sanitation and emergency assistance. UNICEF operates in countries and territories worldwide.

INTERNATIONAL

Pakistan Imposes Governor's Rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

In the News: Pakistan imposed emergency and governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa amid rising security and political tensions. President Asif Ali Zardari approved the move on the advice of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the federal cabinet. The provincial government led by Imran Khan's PTI was suspended.

Key Points:

- **Governor's Rule Imposed:** Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was placed under emergency and governor's rule. The provincial government was suspended, and the governor was given authority to run the province with an advisory council.

- **Constitutional Provisions:** The move was taken under Articles 232 and 234 of Pakistan's Constitution. Article 232 relates to emergency, while Article 234 allows federal action when a provincial government cannot function according to the Constitution.
- **Reason Given:** The federal government cited worsening law and order and lack of cooperation in counter-terrorism operations. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa borders Afghanistan and has faced repeated militant violence and security challenges.
- **Political Context:** The suspended provincial government was led by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the party of jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan. The decision escalated tensions between the federal government and PTI.

2026 Economics Nobel: How to keep an economy stable using policy tools

In the News: The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences announced the 2026 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences for economists Robert E. Hall and Michael Woodford. They were recognised for their contributions to the microeconomic foundations of macroeconomic stabilisation. Their research explains how monetary and fiscal policies can help manage inflation, unemployment and economic fluctuations.

Key Points:

- **2026 Nobel Laureates:** Robert E. Hall is associated with Stanford University, while Michael Woodford is associated with Columbia University. Their research has contributed to modern macroeconomic models used by central banks and governments to formulate stabilisation policies.
- **Major Research Contribution:** Their work connects individual decisions by households and businesses with broader economic outcomes. These microeconomic foundations help explain consumption, investment, inflation and economic fluctuations, providing insights into economic stabilisation.
- **Monetary and Fiscal Policies:** Monetary policy involves interest-rate adjustments, liquidity management and inflation control by central banks. Fiscal policy involves government taxation and expenditure decisions aimed at influencing aggregate demand, employment and economic growth.
- **About Economics Nobel:** The prize is officially known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel. Established in 1968 by Sweden's central bank, it was first awarded in 1969 to Ragnar Frisch and Jan Tinbergen. The 2026 prize carries an award of 12 million Swedish kronor.

Friendliest Cities in the World 2026

In the News: Condé Nast Traveller released its World's Friendliest Cities 2026 rankings on October 6, 2026, as part of the Readers' Choice Awards. Melbourne, Australia, secured first place with a score of 98.52. Jaipur, Rajasthan, was the only Indian city among the top ten, securing seventh position with a score of 96.67.

Key Points:

- **Ranking Organisation:** The rankings were published by Condé Nast Traveller under its annual Readers' Choice Awards 2026. The awards are based on readers' experiences and assessments of destinations, including hospitality and interactions with local residents.
- **Top Three Cities:** Melbourne, Australia, ranked first with 98.52 points, followed by Porto, Portugal, with 98.33 points. Seoul, South Korea, secured third position with a score of 97.94.
- **India's Position:** Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan, secured seventh position globally with 96.67 points. Popularly known as the Pink City, Jaipur is also part of India's Golden Triangle tourism circuit connecting Delhi, Agra and Jaipur.
- **Other Leading Cities:** Lisbon, Portugal, ranked fourth with 97.50 points, followed by Amsterdam, Netherlands, in fifth position with 97.35. Perth, Australia, ranked sixth with 97.28 points, while Buenos Aires, Argentina, secured eighth position with 96.37.
- **Remaining Rankings:** Bangkok, Thailand, secured ninth position with 96.16 points, while Cape Town, South Africa, ranked tenth with 96.00. The previous year's winner, Quito, Ecuador, did not appear among the top ten cities in 2026.

CERVAVAC Becomes India's 1st WHO-Prequalified Indigenous HPV Vaccine

In the News: The Serum Institute of India announced that CERVAVAC, India's first indigenously developed gender-neutral quadrivalent Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, had received World Health Organization (WHO) prequalification. The prequalification became effective on September 25, 2026. The approval enables the vaccine to be procured through United Nations agencies for immunisation programmes.

Key Points:

- Developer and Recognition: CERVAVAC was developed by the Pune-based Serum Institute of India, headed by CEO Adar Poonawalla. Its WHO prequalification represents the company's 32nd prequalification for vaccines and other biological products.
- Vaccine Composition: CERVAVAC is a recombinant quadrivalent HPV vaccine targeting HPV types 6, 11, 16 and 18. HPV types 16 and 18 are associated with cervical and other cancers, while types 6 and 11 are responsible for most genital warts.
- Eligible Population: The vaccine is indicated for boys and girls aged 9–26 years. It is administered through intramuscular injection and is intended to prevent diseases associated with the four targeted HPV types.
- WHO Prequalification: The WHO Prequalification Programme assesses vaccines against international quality, safety and efficacy standards. Prequalified vaccines become eligible for procurement by United Nations agencies, including UNICEF, supporting their use in international immunisation programmes.
- Cervical Cancer Prevention: Persistent infection with high-risk HPV types is the principal cause of cervical cancer. The WHO's global cervical cancer elimination strategy follows the 90-70-90 targets for vaccination, screening and treatment by 2030.

Black Sea Attacks Renew Focus on Seafarer Safety

In the News: A series of attacks on commercial vessels in the Black Sea in October 2026 has raised concerns about maritime security and the safety of merchant sailors. On October 15, two chemical tankers caught fire near Romania's Black Sea coast, with seven sailors reported missing from one vessel. The incidents have increased international attention on the protection of civilian shipping during armed conflicts.

Key Points:

- **Recent Maritime Incidents:** The San Marino-flagged tanker Wine Trader caught fire near Romania's Sulina port area, leaving seven crew members missing and five rescued. Another vessel, the Comoros-flagged Yara J, also caught fire, but its crew remained safe. Authorities investigated the incidents amid reports of drone activity.
- **Black Sea Geography:** The Black Sea is bordered by Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia and Georgia. It connects to the Mediterranean Sea through the Bosporus, Sea of Marmara and Dardanelles. The region is an important route for grain exports, petroleum products and international trade.
- **International Maritime Organization:** The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations responsible for maritime safety, security and pollution prevention. Established through a convention adopted in 1948, it is headquartered in London. IMO has condemned attacks on civilian merchant vessels in the Black Sea region.
- **International Maritime Regulations:** The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, establishes international standards for ship safety. The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, adopted by the International Labour Organization, protects seafarers' working and living conditions. These frameworks support maritime safety and crew welfare.
- **Impact on Global Shipping:** Attacks on commercial vessels threaten seafarers, disrupt maritime trade routes and increase shipping insurance and operating costs. The incidents have also raised concerns about grain exports through Black Sea and Danube transport corridors. Romania and Bulgaria have sought stronger maritime security coordination with NATO.

India's Passport Ranks 84th in Henley Passport Index October 2026

In the News: India secured the 84th position in the October 2026 Henley Passport Index, improving by one place compared with October 2025. Indian passport holders can access 55 destinations without obtaining a visa in advance, compared with 57 in the previous year. India shares the 84th position with Algeria and Mauritania.

Key Points:

- **India's Global Ranking:** India ranked 84th in the October 2026 Henley Passport Index, compared with 85th in October 2025. Despite the improvement in ranking, the number of destinations accessible without a prior visa declined from 57 to 55. India shares its position with Algeria and Mauritania.

- **Top-Ranked Countries:** Singapore retained the first position in the October 2026 ranking. Japan, South Korea and the United Arab Emirates shared second place, reflecting their extensive international travel access. Afghanistan remained at the bottom of the global passport ranking.
- **About Henley Passport Index:** The Henley Passport Index is published by Henley & Partners, a global residence and citizenship advisory firm. It evaluates the travel freedom associated with different passports. The ranking is based on data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA).
- **Ranking Methodology:** The index covers 199 passports and 227 travel destinations worldwide. Countries are ranked according to the number of destinations their passport holders can visit without securing a visa before departure. Its mobility score includes qualifying visa-on-arrival and electronic travel authorisation arrangements.
- **India's Passport Mobility:** India's ranking reflects its international travel-access arrangements and changes in visa policies across destinations. Visa exemptions, bilateral agreements and entry regulations influence passport mobility. The index provides a comparative assessment of international travel freedom.

India to Participate in SCO Heads of Government Meeting in Tajikistan

In the News: Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to represent India at the 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The meeting is scheduled for October 19–20, 2026, in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan. Discussions will focus on economic cooperation, investment, connectivity, innovation and institutional coordination among member states.

Key Points:

- **Meeting Details:** The 25th SCO Council of Heads of Government Meeting is scheduled to take place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on October 19–20, 2026. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will lead India's participation. The meeting will review ongoing multilateral cooperation and the organisation's financial and institutional functioning.
- **About SCO:** The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation was established on June 15, 2001, in Shanghai, China. Its founding members were China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The organisation's permanent secretariat is located in Beijing, China.
- **SCO Membership:** The SCO currently has ten members: China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan, Iran and Belarus. India and Pakistan became full members in 2017, Iran joined in 2023, and Belarus joined in 2024. The organisation works on regional security, political and economic cooperation.
- **Previous Meeting:** The 24th SCO Council of Heads of Government Meeting was held in Moscow, Russia, on November 18, 2025. India was represented by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar. The Council of Heads of Government is an important SCO mechanism for economic cooperation and organisational decision-making.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Sunil Bharti Mittal to Receive France's Highest Civilian Honour, Legion of Honour

In the News: It was announced that French President Emmanuel Macron had conferred the Knight of the National Order of the Legion of Honour on Sunil Bharti Mittal, founder and Chairman of Bharti Enterprises. The recognition honours his contributions to telecommunications, digital infrastructure and India-France economic relations. The award ceremony is scheduled for October 28, 2026, at the French Embassy in New Delhi.

Key Points:

- **About Legion of Honour:** The National Order of the Legion of Honour is France's highest civilian distinction, established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802. It recognises exceptional achievements in military and civilian fields, including contributions by foreign nationals to France and international cooperation.
- **Categories of the Honour:** The Legion of Honour has five ranks: Knight (Chevalier), Officer, Commander, Grand Officer and Grand Cross. Sunil Bharti Mittal has been awarded the rank of Knight, which is the first rank in the order.
- **About Sunil Bharti Mittal:** Mittal is the founder and Chairman of Bharti Enterprises, whose flagship telecommunications company is Bharti Airtel. He also serves as Co-Chairman of Eutelsat, a European satellite communications company, strengthening cooperation in digital connectivity.
- **Previous International Recognition:** In 2024, first Indian citizen to receive KBE under King Charles III. He was also awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2007 for his contributions to trade and industry.

- **India-France Relations:** India and France established a Strategic Partnership in 1998, covering defence, space, nuclear energy and technology. The Horizon 2047 roadmap, adopted in 2023, outlines long-term bilateral cooperation in innovation, digital technologies and strategic industries.

Hall and Woodford Win 2026 Economics Nobel

In the News: American economists Robert E. Hall and Michael Woodford won the 2026 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences. They were awarded for their work on the microeconomic foundations of macroeconomic stabilisation. Their research has influenced modern central banking, fiscal policy and economic crisis management.

Key Points:

- **2026 Laureates:** Robert E. Hall and Michael Woodford were named winners of the 2026 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel. Hall is associated with Stanford University and Woodford with Columbia University.
- **Award Citation:** The prize recognised their contribution to microeconomic foundations of macroeconomic stabilisation. Their work improved models used to understand economic fluctuations, inflation and recessions.
- **Robert Hall's Contribution:** Hall's work focused on household consumption decisions and expectations about the future. His research showed that consumer behaviour is shaped by future income expectations and uncertainty.
- **Michael Woodford's Contribution:** Woodford's work shaped modern monetary policy theory. His research strengthened the use of interest-rate policy, forward guidance and expectations in central bank decision-making.

Oscar Whitfield Wins Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2026

In the News: Fourteen-year-old Oscar Whitfield, representing Zimbabwe and the United Kingdom, won the Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2026 title for his black-and-white photograph Labour of Love. The winners were announced on October 13, 2026, at the Natural History Museum in London. The photograph depicts a dung beetle pushing a ball of dung in Zimbabwe's Zambezi National Park.

Key Points:

- **Award and Winning Photograph:** Oscar Whitfield won the overall Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year title and the 11–14 Years category. His photograph, Labour of Love, captures a dung beetle pushing a ball of dung across dry ground under intense sunlight.
- **Competition Organiser:** The Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition is developed and produced by the Natural History Museum, London. Established in 1965, it is an internationally recognised wildlife photography competition highlighting biodiversity and natural environments.
- **Overall Winner of 2026:** Italian photographer Federico Veronesi won the overall Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2026 award for The Aftermath. His black-and-white photograph depicts an elephant carrying a dead calf in Namibia.
- **Competition Participation:** The 2026 competition received approximately 65,000 entries from 121 countries and territories. Photographs were evaluated anonymously by a panel of seven judges on creativity, technical excellence and originality.

ENVIRONMENT

Living Planet Report 2026 Records Wildlife Population Decline

In the News: WWF's Living Planet Report 2026 recorded a 73% average decline in monitored vertebrate wildlife populations between 1970 and 2022. The report is based on the Living Planet Index prepared with the Zoological Society of London. It highlights continuing pressure on biodiversity across the world.

Key Points:

- **Major Finding:** The report recorded a 73% average decline in monitored wildlife populations over 52 years. The decline covers monitored vertebrates such as mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish.
- **About the Report:** The Living Planet Report is a flagship publication of WWF. Its Living Planet Index is produced with the Zoological Society of London. The 2026 assessment includes 35,803 population trends of 5,790 vertebrate species.
- **Main Drivers:** Habitat loss, overexploitation, climate change, pollution and invasive species remain major causes of biodiversity decline. These pressures affect forests, freshwater systems, oceans and grassland ecosystems.

- **Ecosystem Concern:** Wildlife decline indicates stress on natural systems that support food, water, climate regulation and livelihoods. Biodiversity loss can weaken ecosystem resilience and increase risks for human societies.
- **Recovery Message:** The report also notes that conservation action can support recovery where protection, restoration and community participation are sustained. Examples such as tiger recovery and other species improvements show that targeted conservation can produce results.

Kerala Launches India's First Ecosystem Red List Assessment

In the News: Kerala launched a Red List assessment project to scientifically evaluate the health and risk status of its ecosystems. The project report compilation was released by Kerala Environment Minister Sunny Joseph. The initiative will assess ecosystem collapse risks using IUCN Red List of Ecosystems guidelines.

Key Points:

- **About the Project:** The project is titled Red List Assessment of Ecosystems and Global Ecosystem Typology Characterisation of Kerala's unique ecosystems. It is being taken up by the Kerala State Biodiversity Board.
- **Ecosystems Covered:** The assessment will cover important ecosystems such as the Western Ghats, river basins, wetlands and coastal areas. These ecosystems are ecologically sensitive and face pressure from climate change, land-use change and human activity.
- **IUCN Framework:** The assessment follows the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems approach. Unlike the Red List of Threatened Species, this framework evaluates the risk of collapse faced by entire ecosystems.
- **Technology Used:** The project will use tools such as Google Earth Engine, Sentinel satellite imagery, QGIS mapping and R-based statistical analysis. These tools will support scientific mapping and risk assessment.
- **Conservation Value:** The assessment will help identify vulnerable ecosystems requiring conservation, restoration and planning support. It will strengthen biodiversity governance and ecosystem-based policy decisions in Kerala.

Asiatic Lions Return to Barda Wildlife Sanctuary After 144 Years

In the News: Asiatic lions have re-established a presence in Gujarat's Barda Wildlife Sanctuary after an absence of approximately 144 years. A recent study published in PLOS One examined their habitat use, movement patterns and food preferences in the sanctuary. Reports indicate that Barda now supports 17 Asiatic lions, strengthening efforts to establish an additional lion habitat beyond the Gir landscape.

Key Points:

- **Return of Asiatic Lions:** Lions returned to Barda through the natural dispersal of a male lion and the subsequent introduction of five females by the Gujarat Forest Department. The sanctuary is now reported to support 17 Asiatic lions. The development marks the recolonisation of an area that formed part of their historical range.
- **About Barda Wildlife Sanctuary:** Barda Wildlife Sanctuary is located in Gujarat's Saurashtra region, mainly around Porbandar and adjoining areas. It was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1979 and covers approximately 192.31 square kilometres. The sanctuary contains dry deciduous forests, scrub vegetation and grassland habitats.
- **Scientific Study:** Researchers studied six radio-collared lions to assess their movement, habitat selection and feeding patterns. The findings showed a preference for mixed forests and grasslands at different spatial scales. Wild pigs accounted for approximately 55% of recorded prey occurrences, followed by domestic cattle at 17%.
- **Conservation Measures:** The Gujarat Forest Department is working to improve prey availability through habitat management and the introduction of species such as spotted deer and sambar. Conservation measures also focus on reducing human-lion conflict and protecting wildlife corridors. Barda is being developed as an additional habitat for the Asiatic lion population.
- **Asiatic Lion Conservation:** The Asiatic lion, scientifically known as Panthera leo persica, is primarily associated with Gujarat's Gir landscape. It receives protection under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. Establishing additional habitats can reduce the risks associated with concentrating a wildlife population within a single landscape.

SCIENCE AND TECH

TRISHNA Satellite Mission 2027

In the News: The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and France's National Centre for Space Studies (CNES) are jointly developing the TRISHNA Earth-observation satellite, scheduled for launch in 2027. The mission will use advanced

thermal infrared and optical imaging to monitor Earth's surface temperature, water resources and environmental conditions. It will support climate research, agricultural monitoring and natural resource management.

Key Points:

- **Mission and Collaboration:** TRISHNA stands for Thermal Infra-Red Imaging Satellite for High-resolution Natural Resource Assessment. It is a joint Earth-observation mission between ISRO and CNES, the French national space agency established in 1961.
- **Scientific Objectives:** The mission will measure land-surface temperatures, evapotranspiration and vegetation water stress to improve the assessment of water availability. Its observations will support agricultural water management, drought monitoring and climate studies.
- **Scientific Instruments:** TRISHNA will carry two principal instruments: a Thermal Infrared (TIR) instrument developed by CNES and a Visible-Near Infrared-Shortwave Infrared (VNIR-SWIR) instrument developed by ISRO. Together, they will provide thermal and optical measurements of Earth's surface.
- **Orbital Characteristics:** The satellite is planned to operate in a Sun-synchronous orbit at approximately 761 kilometres above Earth. It is designed to revisit locations near the equator approximately every three days, with a nominal mission lifetime of five years.
- **Environmental Applications:** TRISHNA will assist in monitoring urban heat islands, coastal and inland water quality, volcanic thermal anomalies and glacier dynamics. The collected information will support environmental planning, water management and assessments of climate-related changes.

What Is the JWALA Missile? IG Defence Develops Counter-Drone Interceptor

In the News: Indian private defence company IG Defence successfully tested two solid rocket motors for its indigenous JWALA micro-missile programme on October 3, 2026. JWALA is being developed as a short-range surface-to-air interceptor for neutralising hostile drones. The successful propulsion tests mark an important developmental milestone, while complete missile flight trials and operational validation remain pending.

Key Points:

- **About JWALA Missile:** JWALA is an indigenous short-range surface-to-air micro-missile being developed by IG Defence. It is designed primarily to intercept unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and other short-range aerial threats. The company describes it as India's first indigenously developed private-sector micro-missile programme.
- **Technical Specifications:** JWALA Mk1 is designed for an engagement range of 2–5 km and an altitude envelope of 50–5,000 metres. Its planned propulsion system uses a dual-pulse solid rocket motor with fin control. The company lists a truck-mounted multi-canister launcher as its launch configuration.
- **Propulsion Test:** IG Defence successfully conducted test firings of two solid rocket motors on October 3, 2026. The tests evaluated the propulsion component of the developing interceptor. The programme must undergo further integrated testing before operational deployment.
- **Counter-Drone Capability:** JWALA is being developed as a hard-kill system intended to physically destroy hostile drones. Unlike electronic countermeasures that disrupt drone communication or navigation, hard-kill interceptors neutralise targets through physical engagement. The programme focuses on affordable and scalable protection against unmanned aerial threats.
- **Integration with GRID System:** JWALA is being integrated with IG Defence's GRID, an AI-powered battle-management architecture. GRID is designed to connect sensors, command systems and interceptors for detection, tracking, threat assessment and authorised engagement. IG Defence has also developed T-SHUL BEAM, an electronic counter-drone system demonstrated at Dronathon 2026 in Pokhran.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Food Day 2026

In the News: World Food Day 2026 was observed globally on October 16 under the theme "Innovate Today. Nourish Tomorrow." The observance marked the anniversary of the establishment of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in 1945. The 2026 campaign highlighted the role of innovation, traditional knowledge and inclusive agricultural practices in building resilient food systems.

Key Points:

- **Date and Theme:** World Food Day is observed annually on October 16. The theme for 2026 was "Innovate Today. Nourish Tomorrow." It emphasised the use of scientific innovation, modern agricultural technologies and traditional knowledge to improve food security and nutrition.
- **Historical Background:** The Food and Agriculture Organization was established on October 16, 1945, in Quebec City, Canada. World Food Day was established in 1979 during the FAO Conference, and its first observance took place in 1981. The day commemorates the organisation's founding and its efforts to combat global hunger.
- **About FAO:** The Food and Agriculture Organization is a specialised agency of the United Nations headquartered in Rome, Italy. Its primary mandate includes improving nutrition, strengthening food security and promoting sustainable agriculture. Qu Dongyu serves as its Director-General.
- **Global Food Security:** FAO highlighted that approximately 645 million people worldwide face hunger, while about 2.69 billion cannot afford a healthy diet. The 2026 observance focused on improving agricultural productivity, food accessibility and resilience against climate-related disruptions.
- **Sustainable Development Goals:** World Food Day is closely associated with Sustainable Development Goal 2, which seeks to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030. The 2026 campaign promoted digital advisory services, improved seeds, sustainable farming, stronger food supply chains and reduced food waste.
- **Global Observance:** The main World Food Day 2026 ceremony was organised at FAO headquarters in Rome. Activities were held across more than 150 countries to promote awareness of food security and sustainable agriculture. The campaign encouraged cooperation among governments, farmers, researchers, businesses and civil society.

STATIC

How the Election Commission was set up, how it got 3 members in 1993

In the News: The structure of the Election Commission of India came into discussion due to renewed focus on how the poll body was originally set up and how it became a three-member body in 1993. The issue is linked with Article 324, election administration and institutional independence. The Election Commission has functioned as a three-member body since October 1993.

Key Points:

- **Constitutional Basis:** Article 324 of the Constitution vests the superintendence, direction and control of elections in the Election Commission. It covers elections to Parliament, State Legislatures and the offices of President and Vice-President.
- **Initial Structure:** The Election Commission was set up on January 25, 1950. It initially functioned as a single-member body with only the Chief Election Commissioner. Sukumar Sen was India's first Chief Election Commissioner.
- **First Expansion:** The Commission was made a multi-member body in 1989 by appointing two additional Election Commissioners. It later returned to a single-member body in January 1990. This period is important in the institutional evolution of the poll body.
- **Three-Member Body in 1993:** On October 1, 1993, the Commission was again expanded by appointing two Election Commissioners. Since then, it has functioned as a three-member body consisting of the Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners.
- **Judicial Validation:** In T.N. Seshan v. Union of India, the Supreme Court upheld the validity of the multi-member Election Commission. The Court recognised that the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners participate in decision-making, and the institution must function independently and collectively.

SPORTS

UNICEF India Names Smriti Mandhana Celebrity Advocate

In the News: Coinciding with the International Day of the Girl Child, UNICEF India named Indian cricketer Smriti Mandhana as its Celebrity Advocate. The appointment was formally announced on October 11, 2026. Mandhana will support UNICEF initiatives promoting children's rights, adolescent girls' empowerment, health, education and equal opportunities in sports.

Key Points:

- **About Smriti Mandhana:** Smriti Mandhana is an Indian international cricketer and an Arjuna Award recipient. She was part of India's victorious 2025 ICC Women's Cricket World Cup team and has been named ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year twice.
- **Role as UNICEF Celebrity Advocate:** Mandhana will support UNICEF India's initiatives focusing on adolescent girls' education, health, protection and empowerment. She has previously participated in UNICEF-ICC campaigns promoting gender equality, life skills and opportunities for children.
- **About UNICEF:** The United Nations Children's Fund was established on December 11, 1946, by the United Nations General Assembly. Headquartered in New York, UNICEF works in over 190 countries and territories to protect children's rights and improve access to education, nutrition, healthcare and sanitation.
- **International Day of the Girl Child:** Observed annually on October 11, the day was established through UN General Assembly Resolution 66/170 in 2011. First observed in 2012, it focuses on advancing girls' rights and addressing challenges relating to education, health, discrimination and child marriage.
- **Children's Rights Framework:** UNICEF's work is guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), adopted in 1989 and effective from 1990. India ratified the convention in 1992. It recognises children's rights relating to survival, development, protection and participation.

Vishvajit More Wins India's First U23 Greco-Roman Silver

In the News: Indian wrestler Vishvajit Ramchandra More created history by winning a silver medal at the 2026 U23 World Wrestling Championships in Las Vegas, United States. Competing in the men's 55 kg Greco-Roman category, he became the first Indian wrestler to reach a Greco-Roman final at the U23 World Championships. He narrowly lost the final to Georgia's Koba Karumidze by 13-12.

Key Points:

- **Historic Silver Medal:** Vishvajit More became India's first silver medallist in Greco-Roman wrestling at the U23 World Wrestling Championships. He competed in the men's 55 kg category and finished as runner-up. His silver medal marked India's first appearance in a Greco-Roman final at this competition.
- **Final Match Result:** More faced Georgia's Koba Karumidze in the championship final and lost by a narrow margin of 13-12. The closely contested bout was decided in the closing moments. Karumidze secured the gold medal, while More finished with silver.
- **Road to the Final:** More defeated Mexico's Isaac Marin Mata 10-8 in his opening bout and Iran's Armin Shamsipour 8-1 in the quarterfinal. He subsequently defeated Russia's Malik Gigiev 6-4 in the semifinal. These victories made him the first Indian Greco-Roman finalist in U23 World Championship history.
- **Previous Achievements:** The 22-year-old wrestler belongs to Kolhapur, Maharashtra. He previously won bronze medals at the U23 World Wrestling Championships in 2024 and 2025. His 2026 silver marked his third consecutive medal at the competition.
- **About Greco-Roman Wrestling:** Greco-Roman wrestling is a recognised Olympic discipline in which wrestlers are prohibited from using their legs to attack opponents or gripping below the waist. United World Wrestling (UWW) is the international governing body for wrestling. The 2026 U23 World Wrestling Championships were held in Las Vegas from October 12 to 18.