

Weekly Current Affairs PDF April 23 to April 29, 2023

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INTERNATIONAL

Emirates Unveils World's First Robotic Check-In Assistant

Dubai-based airline Emirates has unveiled its latest innovation, the world's first robotic check-in assistant named Sara. The system is part of a new City Check-in and Travel Store that is set to launch in Dubai's financial district. Sara will match customers' faces with scanned passports, check passengers in, and guide them to the luggage drop area. The facility, which opened on Thursday, April 27, allows customers to drop their luggage as early as 24 hours and up to 4 hours before their flight, arriving at the airport at their leisure. Passengers can check-in via self-check-in kiosks, at dedicated desks with Emirates agents, or with the help of Sara. The robot is equipped with facial recognition technology and can print boarding passes, making the check-in process more efficient. Sara is also portable and can move around to assist those who need help.

World Bank (WB) approves financing of USD 1.25 billion for three new projects in Bangladesh

The World Bank (WB) has approved a financing of USD 1.25 billion for three new projects in Bangladesh to help Bangladesh achieve greener and more resilient development and greater inclusion. The financing was approved after the meeting of the Bank to discuss a new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Bangladesh (2023-27). Out of the three projects, USD 500 million Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship, and Resilience (PARTNER) project will help promote diversification, food safety, entrepreneurship, and climate resilience in the agri-food systems. The USD 500 million First Green and Climate Resilient Development Credit will help the country's transition to green and climate-resilient development. The USD 250 million Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation (SMART) project will help transform the micro-enterprise sector into a more dynamic, less-polluting, resource-efficient, and climate-resilient growth sector. The CPF will support Bangladesh's goal to achieve upper-middle-income country status by 2031 by helping the country address key barriers to higher and sustainable growth. It will help develop a diversified and competitive private sector to create more and better jobs; promote socio-economic inclusion to expand opportunities for all; and address climate and environmental vulnerabilities, said WB.

NATIONAL

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates 91 new 100W FM Transmitters of AIR

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today commissioned Low Power FM Transmitters of capacity of 100 Watt at 91 locations. These transmitters have been installed in 84 districts of 20 states. With this the network of transmitters with All India Radio has

increased from 524 to 615. The addition will further boost the coverage of AIR to 73.5% of the population of the country.

Clear sound quality and easy availability of FM receiver equipped mobile phones has increased the demand of FM radio service in the country. In another major step towards meeting this demand and capacity building of the organisation, Government has further approved installation of 63 more FM transmitters in the country.

The Prime Minister congratulated All India Radio on this momentous occasion. Speaking about the significance of the addition, the Prime Minister said that today marks a significant step in the expansion of FM services by All India Radio in the direction of becoming All India FM. He underlined that the beginning of 91 FM transmitters by All India Radio is like a present for 85 districts and 2 crore people of the nation.

ITC becomes India's 6th valuable company, overtakes Infosys

FMCG giant ITC has now overtaken the market capitalisation of Infosys to become India's sixth most valuable company on the stock exchanges.

ITC's market cap stands at Rs. 5.111 Lakh crore (As of April 24 2023) while the market cap of Infosys (7th place) stands at Rs. 5.08 Lakh crore ,

To become the country's 5th most valuable company, ITC will need some gas as rival FMCG firm Hindustan Unilever (HUL) currently commands an m-cap of Rs 5.88 lakh crore.

ITC's market capitalisation ranking improved two spots in three sessions as the share price hit a high of Rs 413.45 on Monday before closing the session at Rs 411.35. At the end of Monday's trade, ITC's m-cap stood at Rs 5.11 lakh crore while Infosys' valuation stood at Rs 5.08 lakh crore.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Siddhartha Mohanty Appointed As LIC Chairman

The government has appointed Siddhartha Mohanty as chairman of Life Insurance Corporation of India till June 2024, Chairman He will be the managing director and chief executive officer of the insurance behemoth from June 2024 till June 2025.

Siddhartha Mohanty had been serving as interim chairman of the corporation from March 14, 2023.

Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) recommended Siddhartha Mohanty's name for the post of chairman. The decision regarding the appointment of Mohanty as the LIC chairman was taken by the Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC) headed by PM Narendra Modi.

About: Siddhartha Mohanty - Siddhartha Mohanty is a postgraduate in political science and also holds a degree in law. Siddhartha Mohanty also holds a postgraduate degree in business management and is a licentiate from the Insurance Institute of India. In a career spanning over three decades in the corporation, Mohanty has made his mark in the areas of Marketing, HR, Investments and Legal.

Jet Airways CEO-designate Sanjiv Kapoor quits

Sanjiv Kapoor, the CEO-designate of Jet Airways, has left the company just a year after joining the grounded carrier. Mr Kapoor joined Jet Airways in April last year.

The consortium that is working to revive the airline said in a statement today it will oversee CEO-designate responsibilities until a suitable replacement is found.

The Jet Airways management committee in January asked Mr Kapoor not to use the title of CEO till the troubled airline's ownership was completely transferred to a consortium of lenders.

He continued as CEO-designate till he quit the airline.

Monday will be his last working day, Jalan Kalrock Consortium (JKC) said in the statement .

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Veterinary Day

World Veterinary Day is celebrated on the last Saturday in April annually, with an aim to raise awareness about veterinarians and their utmost devotion to animal health, welfare, and public health. This event is observed to honour and recognise the tireless efforts and perseverance to protect the health and safety of both animals and the populace.

This event is celebrated to honour the endeavours of veterinary professionals globally in augmenting animal health and welfare. World Veterinary Day also brings the global veterinary community together and helps them in getting the proper assistance. The World Veterinary Day (WVD) was first founded on April 29, 2000, by the initiative of the World Veterinary Association (WVA). Since then, every year, on the last Saturday of April, WVD is celebrated with a different theme selected that stresses a distinct aspect of veterinary medicine

Theme - The theme of World Veterinary Day for 2023 is 'Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness in the Veterinary Profession'. The well-being of all veterinarians is enhanced when diversity, equity, and inclusion are promoted and applied.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Indian-American Neeli Bendapudi receives 2023 Immigrant Achievement Award

Indian-American Neeli Bendapudi, the president of Penn State University receives the American Immigration Council's 2023 Immigrant Achievement Award, The award recognises "individuals or organisations that exhibit a commitment and dedication to our heritage as a nation of immigrants and to the struggle for fair and humane immigration policies in the United States

About: Neeli Bendapudi - Neeli Bendapudi was raised in India and she moved to the University of Kansas in the United States for her doctoral studies. She planned to launch her career in academics as an educator. Bendapudi did her Bachelors in English and her MBA from Andhra University in Visakhapatnam, India. She then did her doctorate in Marketing from University of Kansas.

Bendapudi was appointed the 19th President of Penn State University in 2022. Earlier, she was the President of University of Louisville from 2018 to 2021.

BOOKS & AUTHOR

PM Modi revealed the book - Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamprashastih

During the closing ceremony of 'Saurashtra Tamil Sangam', Prime Minister Modi unveiled the book 'Saurashtra Tamil Sangam Prashasti' written by Somnath Sanskrit University on Wednesday. On this occasion, Modi addressed through video conference. 'These programs

help in uncovering the ancient relationships between the people of different parts of the country. Modi's vision is to instill the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshta Bharat in the people through these programs. That is why Kashi Tamil Sangam was organized first. This Saurashtra Tamil Sangam will take forward the culture and heritage between Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. Centuries ago, many migrated to Tamil Nadu from the Saurashtra region of Gujarat. With this Saurashtra Tamil confluence, the people of Saurashtra in Tamil Nadu have a chance to reconnect with their ancient culture,

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Razorpay joins ONDC to offer payment reconciliation service for buyer, seller apps

Fintech unicorn Razorpay has said that it will be joining the Open Network for Digital Commerce ecosystem (ONDC).

The Bengaluru based company will launch a payment reconciliation service for network participants (NPs) like buyers, sellers, and logistic partners, thereby streamlining the payment processes on ONDC, and providing them with an integrated single view of all their transactions.

Through this solution, Razorpay will facilitate ease of transacting on ONDC by timely routing settlement information for a given transaction and assisting Network Participants (NPs) with settling funds. This is a foolproof solution that validates transactions and maintains audit trails to support documentation that will inform any dispute or discrepancy that may arise.

With ONDC open network approach, where the buyers and sellers do not need to necessarily be on the same platform to be able to do a business transaction, ONDC will enable SMEs to access a larger buyer universe.

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NATIONAL

Arjun Vajpai Summits Mt. Annapurna, becomes first Indian man to do so

Indian professional mountaineer Arjun Vajpai, roped in as a Fit India Champion earlier this year has become the first Indian man to summit Mt. Annapurna 1, which is also the 10th highest mountain in the world at 8,091 metres (26,545 ft) above sea level in Nepal.

Arjun made the climb to the 7x8000m summits on April 17 and has now become the first Indian mountaineer to scale 7x8000m peaks. Mt. Annapurna happens to be the most dangerous mountain out of the 14x8000m Summit Mountains.

Bestowed the title of a Fit India Champion, Arjun is already a record holder by becoming one of the youngest mountaineers to climb Mount Everest.

This year, Mt. Annapurna lived up to its reputation for being one of the most difficult and dangerous mountains. While Arjun summited Mt. Annapurna and was back at Camp 4, two Indian climbers were missing by that point and one fellow climber from Ireland died at Camp 4. On the morning of April 18, Arjun and his team decided that the mountain was unsafe for descending all the way up to the Base Camp. They had run out of resources at the lower camps while several attempts were made to find the missing climbers. Arjun was eventually brought back to base camp with the help of a long-line helicopter.

Finance Ministry approves Navratna status to Rail Vikas Nigam Limited

Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Ministry of Finance (MoF) gave its approval to upgrade Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) to Navratna Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE). RVNL, a public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Railways, will be the 13th Navratna amongst CPSEs.

RVNL is currently categorised as a Miniratna Central Public Sector Enterprise. Incorporated in 2003, RVNL is engaged in the planning, development, and implementation of railway infrastructure projects. The discussions regarding the upgrade to Navratna status was initiated on the back of multiple orders that RVNL recently won from the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) and the Railways.

According to the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) RVNL, a public sector undertaking under the Ministry of Railways (MoR), has become the 13th Navratna amongst CPSEs.

About: Navratna CPSE in India -

The term 'Navratna' refers to a select group of top-performing CPSEs that have been granted greater autonomy and financial powers by the Indian government in recognition of their superior performance.

The term 'Navratna', meaning nine gems, is used metaphorically to suggest that these companies are like the nine precious gems that shine brightly in the crown of Indian PSEs.

OBITUARY

Boxing Champion, Padma Shri Awardee Kaur Singh passes away

Boxing champion Kaur Singh breathed his last on Thursday, April 27 in Haryana's Kurukshetra at the age of 74. He had been undergoing treatment for quite some time due to multiple health issues.

Singh garnered loads of laurels in his career. He won six gold medals in international competitions, which included the Asian Games in 1982. He won gold in heavyweight boxing at the Asian Games.

In the same year, Singh got the prestigious Arjuna Award, followed by the Padma Shri in 1983. Thereafter, in 1988, he won the Vishisht Seva Medal, also.

Back on January 27, 1980, Singh also took part in an exhibition match with the legendary Muhammad Ali that took place in New Delhi.

Earlier in April, the Punjab government announced that life stories of four great sportsmen will be included in school curriculum. Textbooks of Class 9 and 10 will have their stories.

Singh is one of the four players along with Balbir Singh Sr, who represented India in three Olympics, athlete Milkha Singh and Gurbachan Singh Randhawa, who was India's very first Arjuna Awardee.

Uttarakhand Minister Chandan Ram Das passes away

Uttarakhand's Minister for Transport and Social Welfare Chandan Ram Das died of a heart attack on Wednesday in Bageshwar. The 65-year-old was brought to the district hospital this afternoon after he complained of suffocation in the chest, Bageshwar's Chief Medical Officer DP Joshi said.

He was shifted to the ICU as his condition worsened. Despite all efforts, he could not be saved, The minister could not be taken to some other hospital in an air ambulance as his condition did not allow it,

The BJP leader represented Bageshwar in four consecutive assemblies since 2007, but he became a minister for the first time in the Pushkar Singh Dhami's cabinet.

About: Chandan Ram Das - Chandan Ram Das was an Indian politician of the Bharatiya Janata Party. Das was a member of the Uttarakhand Legislative Assembly from the Bageshwar constituency in Bageshwar district from 2007 until his death.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

RBI approves re-appointment of N Kamakodi as CUB MD & CEO

The Reserve Bank of India has given its consent for the re-appointment of N Kamakodi as Managing Director and CEO of private sector bank City Union Bank, the Tamil-Nadu-based lender said on Wednesday. The tenure of his re-appointment would be for a period of three years with effect from May 1, 2023.

Dr. N. Kamakodi is serving as MD & CEO of the Bank from May 2011. He joined the Bank as DGM in the year 2003 was elevated to the post of GM in 2005 and later as Executive Director in 2006. He has excellent academic background and also acquired hands on experience on the overall operations of the Bank, He has a degree in Bachelor of Technology in Chemical Engineering, an MBA from Chinese University of Hong Kong, Ph.D. in e-Banking and a CAIIB.

About: City Union Bank – The City Union Bank Limited is an Indian private sector bank headquartered in Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu. The bank was initially named Kumbakonam Bank Limited, and was incorporated on 31 October 1904

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Day for Safety and Health at Work

Every year on April 28, World Day for Safety and Health at Work is celebrated. The day is dedicated to promoting awareness and reducing occupational diseases and accidents worldwide. The emphasis is on the creation and upkeep of the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) management system.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) first observed World Day in 2003 with the objective of avoiding workplace accidents and diseases. The day overlaps with the International Day of Remembrance for the Dead and Injured Workers, which has been observed by the labour movement since 1996.

The day has significance in increasing awareness of ways to make work safe and healthy, as well as the necessity to enhance the political profile of occupational safety and health. The primary goal for this day is to maintain high standards of safety and health, which should be distributed equitably throughout all sectors of society.

This year's World Day for Safety and Health at Work 2022 theme is "A safe and healthy working environment as a fundamental principle and right at work". The focus of the theme is to provide highlights on fostering excellent workplace health through a safe and healthy work environment.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Himachal Pradesh government signs MoU with Oil India to develop new renewable energy sources

To explore the state's solar potential, the Himachal Pradesh government on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Oil India Ltd to establish a framework for cooperation in harnessing and developing new and renewable energy sources in the state. The pact was signed by Harikesh Meena, Director (Energy), on behalf of the state government, and Pankaj Kumar Goswami, Director (Operations), Oil India Ltd, in the presence of Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu.

The Chief Minister said the company would explore the possibilities of setting up floating solar power plants in water reservoirs, besides establishing ground mounted solar power projects.

He said the Oil India can also set up a plant for producing green hydrogen and green ammonia on a pilot basis.

Himachal Pradesh has abundance in green energy and opportunity in producing green hydrogen, and the state government has taken various initiatives to harness this potential, the Chief Minister said, as he asked Oil India to send a team of experts next week to inspect the sites for implementing these projects.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

14th Dalai Lama Gets 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award In Person After 64 Years

The 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award was presented to Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama at his residence here by members of the award foundation personally after 64 years. It was the first international award given to "His Holiness for Community Leadership in recognition of his leadership of the Tibetan community's gallant struggle in defense of the sacred religion that is the inspiration of their life and culture" by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation in the Philippines in August 1959, the Dalai Lama's office said.

Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation president Susanna B Afan and Foundation Trustee Emily A Abrera met with the Dalai Lama, the Nobel Peace laureate, to personally present the 1959 Ramon Magsaysay Award after 64 years.

About: Ramon Magsaysay Award - The Ramon Magsaysay Award, often called the "Nobel Prize of Asia", is an annual award established to perpetuate former Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay's example of integrity in governance, courageous service to the people, and pragmatic idealism within a democratic society, the Dalai Lama's office said. The prize was established in April 1957 by the trustees of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund based in New York City with the concurrence of the Philippine government.

Alessandra Korap from Amazon wins Goldman Environment Prize

Munduruku leader Alessandra Korap has been awarded the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize for her work fighting against illegal mining and large-scale projects aimed at facilitating soybean exports in the Tapajos River Basin.

The Goldman Environmental Prize is a prize awarded annually to grassroots environmental activists, one from each of the world's six geographic regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Islands and Island Nations, North America, and South and Central America. The award is given by

the Goldman Environmental Foundation headquartered in San Francisco, California. It is also called the Green Nobel. The Goldman Environmental Prize was created in 1989 by philanthropists Richard and Rhoda Goldman.

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NATIONAL

Indo – UK joint military exercise “AJEYA WARRIOR-23 being conducted at Salisbury Plains

The 7th edition of joint military exercise “AJEYA WARRIOR-23” between India and the United Kingdom is being conducted at Salisbury Plains, United Kingdom from 27 April to 11 May 2023. Exercise AJEYA WARRIOR is a biennial training event with the United Kingdom which is conducted alternatively in the United Kingdom and India, the last edition was held at Chaubatia, Uttarakhand in October 2021.

Soldiers of the 2 Royal Gorkha Rifles from the United Kingdom and Indian Army soldiers from the BIHAR Regiment are participating in the exercise. The Indian Army contingent arrived at Brize Norton on 26 April 2023 by an Indian Air Force C-17 aircraft with indigenous weapons and equipment.

Aim - The aim of the exercise is to build positive military relations, imbibe each other's best practices and promote the ability to operate together while undertaking company-level sub-conventional operations in urban and semi-urban environments under UN mandate, in addition to developing inter-operability, bonhomie, camaraderie, and friendship between the two armies.

The scope of this exercise involves a Command Post Exercise (CPX) at the Battalion level and Company level Field Training Exercise (FTX). During the exercise, participants will engage in a variety of missions testing their operational acumen in various simulated situations; showcasing and refining their tactical drills, and learning from each other's operational experience.

CCEA approves ₹1,570 crore for 157 new nursing colleges

In a move aimed at strengthening the country's nursing workforce, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), on Wednesday approved setting up of 157 new nursing colleges in co-location with the existing medical colleges established since 2014. The government will spend ₹1,570 crore on the initiative.

This will further ensure quality, affordable, and equitable nursing education in India, particularly in underserved districts and states/union territories ,

Aim - The initiative aims to address the geographical and rural-urban imbalances in the healthcare sector, which have led to the skewed availability of nursing professionals and impacted healthcare services in underserved areas. The establishment of these nursing colleges will provide a significant boost to the availability of qualified human resources in healthcare. This is also being done as a part of the national mandate for Universal Health Care (UHC) and will help in attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Reforms in regulatory structure for nursing education to meet with the emerging requirements in the sector are also under consideration.

The government has been focusing on ensuring quality healthcare workforce with substantial increase in their numbers. The government has increased the number of medical colleges and subsequently increased MBBS seats in the last few years. There is a substantial increase of around 71% in medical colleges from 387 before 2014 to 660 as of now.

J&K LG Manoj Sinha inaugurates newly constructed 576 residential accommodations for PM Package Employees

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha inaugurated newly constructed 576 residential accommodations for PM Package Employees at Baramulla, Bandipora, Ganderbal and Shopian yesterday. Speaking on the occasion, the Lieutenant Governor said, the inauguration is a testimony to government's commitment to create adequate facilities for the prosperity of employees.

Mr. Sinha said, the Government is sensitive to the issues of the Kashmiri migrant families and understands their pain. He said, the government is working with the right intent to complete the construction of residential accommodations on priority. He said, the administration has taken various initiatives to expedite the process of construction of housing units for PM Package employees and two thousand more flats will be completed by December this year.

OBITUARY

Malayalam actor Mamukkoya passes away at the age of 76

Popular Malayalam actor Mamukkoya passed away on Wednesday, April 26, at a private hospital in Kozhikode. According to reports, he breathed his last at around 1.10 pm. He was 76 years old. On Monday, April 24, he collapsed at a football tournament in Malappuram district. He was rushed to the hospital and was put on a ventilator.

On April 24, Mamukkoya was in Malappuram where he inaugurated the Poongod Janakeeya Sevens Football Tournament. The actor complained of uneasiness and, reportedly, collapsed on the football field.

Mamukkoya was rushed to the hospital and was being treated at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). He was put on a ventilator. On April 26, Mamukkoya breathed his last an hour ago, according to hospital authorities. Mamukkoya's sudden demise left the entire Malayalam film industry in a state of shock.

About: Mamukkoya - Mamukkoya made his acting debut in the theatre in 1979. Before that, he worked in a timber mill in Kozhikode. In his four-decade-long career, Mamukkoya acted in over 450 Malayalam films. He also appeared in a French film titled Flammens of Paradise.

The veteran actor was known for the use of the Mappila dialect and his impeccable comedy timing. He won two Kerala State Film Awards for his performances in Perumazhakkalam and Innathe Chintha Vishayam.

Ex Odisha MP And 3 Time MLA Trilochan Kanungo passes away at 82

Veteran politician and former Jagatsinghpur MP Trilochan Kanungo passed away while undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar He was 83. and is survived by

his wife, son and three daughters. His younger brother Panchanan Kanungo is a Congress politician.

The three-time MLA and one-time MP was undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar since March 30. After battling for life for over three weeks, Kanungo breathed his last

Trilochan Kanungo was a former chairman of Cuttack Municipality and ex-chairperson of the state finance commission.

Born on November 24, 1940 at Badamulei village in Cuttack district, Mr Kanungo was residing in Sheikh Bazaar area of Cuttack city for the last few years.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Girls in ICT Day

International Girls in ICT Day is an annual event celebrated on the fourth Thursday of April to encourage and empower girls and young women to explore and pursue careers in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This year, it is being observed on April 27 with the theme "Digital Skills for Life". Despite the significant role of ICT in our lives, a relatively small percentage of women globally opt for higher education in ICT-related fields, according to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

International Girls in ICT Day was declared by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) on April 8, 2011, to encourage women to pursue careers in information and communication technologies. The Day has been celebrated globally since its inception, with over 11,400 events held in 171 countries and more than 3,77,000 girls and young women participating.

Freedom Day : in South Africa

Freedom Day is an annual celebration held on April 27 in South Africa. The day reminds South Africans of the immeasurable sacrifices made by individuals and nations to break them away from the chains of unjust segregation by a selected few. It reminds them of the efforts of their national heroes, particularly Nelson Mandela. He is regarded as a champion of freedom, not only in South Africa but the entire world. It is a day that not only marks the emancipation of South Africans from apartheid but also returned their essential human rights in 1994.

Following the abolition of the decades-long segregation in South Africa, Freedom Day was marked on April 27, 1994, as a multiracial election. Until then, basic human rights and privileges were denied to black South Africans by the few ruling Whites. From then on, April 27 became a symbol of freedom for South Africans. It also commemorates the efforts of national heroes like Nelson Mandela. The struggles and sacrifices of Mandela, other key figures like Desmond Tutu, and many others, brought South Africans the freedom they were long deprived of in their land.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts of SCO member countries in New Delhi

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, SCO member countries in New Delhi today. During the

meeting, bilateral defence-related issues and other matters of mutual interest will be discussed. Mr Singh will chair the SCO Defence Ministers Meeting in New Delhi tomorrow. Defence Ministers of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan will participate in the meeting. India has invited Belarus and Iran, currently observers in SCO, to participate in the SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting. Defence Minister of Pakistan would be participating virtually. The Ministers will discuss matters related to regional peace and security, counter-terrorism efforts within SCO and an effective multilateralism. India has ancient civilizational, cultural and spiritual ties with the SCO member countries. India's membership of SCO in 2017, was therefore, a reaffirmation of New Delhi's keenness to deepen these historic ties. India considers SCO as an important regional group to promote multilateral, political, security, economic and people-to-people interactions in the region.

About: SCO - Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an intergovernmental organization established in 2001. The SCO membership includes Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan besides India.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) UP honoured with HUDCO Award

Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) Uttar Pradesh has been awarded the country's prestigious HUDCO Award for the year (2022-2023).

Manoj Joshi, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, presented the award to Neha Sharma, State Mission Director, Uttar Pradesh, at a program organized on the 53rd Foundation Day of Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited (HUDCO). New Delhi

This award has been given in the Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment 2022-23 category for cleanliness. One lakh rupees was also given to the UP government as a reward. It is noteworthy that this campaign was conducted by the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban) Uttar Pradesh from January 14 to 24. In this, 75 tourist and historical places of the state were included. A special cleanliness drive was launched at these places.

Breast surgeon Dr Raghu Ram receives Telugu Association of London award

Leading surgeon Dr Raghu Ram Pillarisetti has received lifetime achievement award by the Telugu Association of London.

Dr Raghuram is the founding director of AKIMS-Ushalakshmi Centre for Breast Diseases in Hyderabad. He is one of the youngest recipients of the award and the only person of Indian origin living outside of the UK to have been conferred the honour.

The award was presented to him during the glittering Ugadi 2023 celebrations organised by the Telugu Association of London (TAL) in London. Representing over 10,000 Telugu speaking people in and around London, TAL is the largest Telugu Charity Organisation in the UK.

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INTERNATIONAL

Zimbabwe to Introduce Gold-Backed Digital Currency

The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, or RBZ, plans to introduce a gold-backed digital currency as legal tender to help stabilize the local currency, the Zim dollar,

The tokens will be a form of electronic money backed by the country's gold reserves, which will be held by the central bank. The RBZ wants people holding Zim dollars to be able to exchange their money for the gold-backed token to help them hedge against the volatility of the local currency.

The Zimbabwean economy operates on a dual currency structure, with the Zimbabwean dollar and the U.S. dollar in use. The U.S. dollar currently dominates and accounts for about 70% of domestic transactions, according to the RBZ. In an effort to halt the collapse of the Zimbabwean dollar and reduce the demand for the U.S. dollar, the RBZ introduced gold coins in July 2022.

A year ago, 1 U.S. dollar was worth about 150 Zim dollars, and it's now worth closer 1,000 Zim dollars,

Shahabuddin Chuppu takes oath as Bangladesh's 22nd President

Mohammed Shahabuddin Chuppu, a retired judge and former commissioner of the Anti-Corruption Commission, took the oath as the 22nd President of Bangladesh, with Parliament Speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury administering the oath of office to Shahabuddin.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Cabinet members and hundreds of distinguished guests attended the oath-taking ceremony, which was held in the historic Durbar Hall of the Bangabhaban, the presidential palace, Xinhua news agency reported.

Outgoing President Md Abdul Hamid congratulated the newly-elected President, a ruling Bangladesh Awami League (AL) party nominee who was elected unopposed on February 13. Hamid's second and last tenure expired on Monday.

NATIONAL

Three new wildlife conservation reserves in Rajasthan

On Earth Day 2023, Rajasthan's Forest Department announced three new conservation reserves that will protect the rare and endangered wildlife of Rajasthan. These three new wildlife conservation reserves are Sorsan in Baran, Khichan in Jodhpur, and Hamirgarh in Bhilwara.

The Rajasthan Forest Department has set the conservation bar quite high with these new additions. Here's how:

The grasslands of Sorsan in Baran will be a safe home for the Great Indian Bustard, a species that's on the verge of extinction. As per the reports, only 200 of these Critically Endangered birds are left in the world.

Sorsan will not only protect the Great Indian Bustard, but will also protect blackbucks, the state animal of Rajasthan, whose numbers have declined drastically due to excessive hunting, habitat loss and rampant deforestation.

Every year, Khichan in Jodhpur, hosts thousands of migratory Demoiselle cranes. Now, with the tag of conservation reserve, Khichan will be a safe home to these birds who come to this part of the country to winter.

Khichan is also India's first conservation reserve for Demoiselle cranes.

When areas are marked as conservation areas, It becomes mandatory for any developmental projects to get clearance as per the Forest Conservation Act, 1990. Any developmental projects within the conservation area need to get the approval of the National Board for Wildlife, and State Board of Wildlife.

With these three new additions, now there are 26 wildlife conservation reserves in Rajasthan. Some of the well-known conservation reserves are Bisalpur Conservation Reserve in Tonk, Jodbeed Gadhwala Bikaner Conservation Reserve in Bikaner, Khetri Bansyal Conservation Reserve in Jhunjhunu, and Jawai Bandh Leopard Conservation Reserve in Pali.

OBITUARY

Former Punjab CM & senior Shiromani Akali Dal leader Parkash Singh Badal passes away

Parkash Singh Badal, former Chief Minister of Punjab and senior leader of Shiromani Akali Dal passed away in Mohali last evening, April 25. He was 95. Mr. Badal, a five-time chief minister, was admitted to the intensive care unit of a private hospital on Sunday following a complaint of difficulty in breathing.

Parkash Singh Badal was born on December 8, 1927, in Abul Khurana near Malout. He entered the state Assembly from Malout in 1957 as the Congress nominee and in 1969, entered the Assembly from Gidderbaha seat on the SAD ticket. He was elected as MLA for 11 times, losing only twice.

Badal became the Chief Minister for the first time in 1970. He was the youngest Chief Minister and headed a coalition government. But the government did not complete its term. Later, he became the Chief Minister four times, from 1977 to 1980, 1997 to 2002, 2007 to 2012, and 2012 to 2017. In 1977, he briefly joined Morarji Desai's government as the Agriculture minister at the Centre.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Hari Hara Mishra takes charge as CEO of Association of ARC

Hari Hara Mishra has taken charge as the Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Asset Reconstruction Companies.

The Association, which is the voice of all Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs), has been active for more than eight years. Currently, there are 28 ARCs registered with Reserve Bank of India.

Mishra, who worked with State Bank of India from 1982 to 2004, Officer, has been associated with Asset Reconstruction Sector since those formative days (2004) till date, in various ARCs in executive and director level roles.

"ARCs are passing through a difficult phase in terms of trust deficit with various stakeholders. My primary goal will be to restore the confidence in the functioning of ARCs by focussing on win-win strategy and value unlocking for all players in the broader ecosystem," he said.

About: ARC - An Asset Reconstruction Company is a specialized financial institution that buys the NPAs or bad assets from banks and financial institutions so that the latter can clean up their balance sheets. In other words, ARCs are in the business of buying bad loans from banks.

Nasscom appoints Microsoft India head Anant Maheshwari as chairperson

The National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) has appointed Microsoft India's president Anant Maheshwari as its Chairperson for the year 2023-24, promoting him from his previous tenure as vice-chairperson. He has taken the reins from Krishnan Ramanujam, who heads business and technology services at Tata Consultancy Services.

The advocacy group also appointed Rajesh Nambiar, Chairman and MD, Cognizant India as its Vice Chairperson for the current year. The apex organisation for technology services in India also updated its executive council for the 2023-24, one-third of which is made of women.

Nasscom said that through the appointment of its new leadership and council, it aims to spearhead India's goal of doubling the technology industry to \$500 billion by 2030 from a current valuation of \$245 billion.

Shreekant Bhandiwad named as the new Chairman of KVGB

Shreekant M Bhandiwad has taken charge as the new Chairman of Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank (KVGB). Prior to his joining as Chairman of KVGB, Bhandiwad was heading the Patna circle of Canara Bank.

A postgraduate in agriculture, he has worked as an Agricultural Extension Officer in rural branches of Canara Bank and also worked as a consultant in Agricultural Consultancy Services of Canara Bank at the Head Office.

A native of Dharwad, Bhandiwad carries with him an experience of 29 years in Canara Bank. He has worked in states such as Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar and Karnataka in various capacities such as branch in-charge, regional head and circle head. Besides this, he was Deputy Managing Director of Canfin Homes Ltd for a period of three years.

P Gopikrishna, the earlier Chairman, repatriated to Canara Bank as Circle Head, Bengaluru. A statement said that the bank's business increased from ₹24,775 crore to ₹33,100 crore during Gopikrishna's tenure.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Intellectual Property Day

World Intellectual Property Day is observed annually on April 26. The event was established by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 2000 to "raise awareness of how patents, copyright, trademarks and designs impact on daily life" and "to celebrate creativity, and the contribution made by creators and innovators to the development of economies and societies across the globe". April 26 was chosen as the date for World Intellectual Property Day because it coincides with the date on which the Convention Establishing the World Intellectual Property Organization entered into force in 1970. World Intellectual Property Day is WIPO's largest intellectual property (IP) public outreach campaign

WIPO, a self-funded specialized agency of the United Nations, plays a crucial role in establishing a fair and accessible global intellectual property system. In the year 2000, the member states of WIPO agreed to observe World Intellectual Property Day on April 26th every year to celebrate the establishment of the WIPO Convention in 1970.

The Convention aims to bridge the gap between intellectual property as a legal or business concept and its impact on people's lives. By observing this day, WIPO hopes to increase awareness of the importance of intellectual property rights and encourage innovation and creativity across the globe.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Prasar Bharati's conclave to celebrate 100 episodes of PM Modi's Mann Ki Baat

Prasar Bharati is hosted a national conclave on "Mann Ki Baat@100" to celebrate 100 episodes of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat, in New Delhi today., April 26. The inaugural session of the Conclave will be graced by Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar and Minister of Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Singh Thakur.

Briefing the media, Information and Broadcasting Secretary Apoorva Chandra said, the inaugural session will be followed by 4 sessions highlighting the wide-ranging themes of the Prime Minister's interactions during Mann Ki Baat. Each session will be facilitated by an eminent panel.

The valedictory session of the event will be graced by Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah, Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur and Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary. The Secretary said, a commemorative postage stamp and coin on 100 episodes of Mann Ki Baat will be unveiled to mark this event. The 100th episode of this coveted programme will be broadcast this Sunday on over 1000 radio stations, including private FM stations, community radios, and various TV channels.

Indian apex exporters body sign MoU with Business Russia to promote trade & FDI

Apex exporters body FIEO on Monday said it has signed an MoU with Business Russia to promote trade and investments between the two countries.

It said the two organizations will cooperate to arrange exhibitions, buyers-sellers' meetings, workshops, seminars and encourage enterprises to work in tandem with their counterparts for joint ventures.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was inked during a visit of a 50-member delegation of the agro and food processing sector to Moscow.

The delegation is "exploring opportunities in diverse business ventures such as ready-to-eat meals, fish meal, animal feed, soyabean apart from conventional products," said N K Kagliwal, Board Member of FIEFIEO Director General Ajay Sahai said that exporters, importers and bankers on both the sides have to do a little extra work to resolve the issues.

"A direct exchange rate between rupee and ruble will help streamline the process in a big way," Sahai said. He added that huge trade deficit is a concern, but it is also an opportunity to push exports from India to Russia. "We have to diversify exports to automobiles and

auto components, electronics, medical devices, solar cells, textile, food and agriculture etc," he said. O (Federation of Indian Export Organisations).

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NATIONAL

PM Modi Flags Off Kerala's First Vande Bharat Train From Thiruvananthapuram Central Station

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday flagged off Kerala's first Vande Bharat Express train from Thiruvananthapuram Central Station. The high-speed train will run between Thiruvananthapuram and Kasargod. As indicated by Prime Minister's Office, the Vande Bharat train will cover 11 regions to be specifically Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Kottayam, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Pathanamthitta, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargod. The Vande Bharat train between Thiruvananthapuram and Kasargod will cover a distance of around 588 kilometres in around eight hours.

PM Narendra Modi also laid the foundation of different rail projects including the redevelopment of Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode, Varkala Sivagiri rail line stations; extensive improvement of the Thiruvananthapuram region, including Nemon and Kochuveli, as well as an increase in the sectional speed of the Thiruvananthapuram-Shoranur section.

PM Narendra Modi flagged off India's first water metro in Kochi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is on a two-day Kerala visit, flagged off India's first water metro that connects 10 islands around Kochi through battery-operated electric hybrid boats for seamless connectivity with the city.

Water Metro provides a distinctive urban transportation system that offers a comparable level of convenience and travel experience to traditional metro systems. This mode of transit is particularly valuable in cities such as Kochi.

ABOUT THE KOCHI WATER METRO - The metro project will start with eight electric hybrid boats developed under Cochin Shipyard Limited. The Kerala government and the German company KfW are funding this dream project. It consists of 38 terminals and 78 electric boats.

The KWM service will launch in the first phase from the High Court-Vypin and Vyttila-Kakkanad terminals. The tickets for the boat trip start at Rs 20. For frequent travellers, there are weekly and monthly passes available.

Using a Kochi One Card, one can travel on both Kochi Metro Rail and Kochi Water Metro. The Kochi One App allows users to digitally purchase tickets.

Operation Kaveri: INS Sumedha With 278 Indians Onboard Departs Port Sudan For Jeddah.

The first batch of Indians stranded in Sudan were evacuated under Operation Kaveri on Tuesday. INS Sumedha departed Port Sudan for Jeddah with 278 people onboard. Foreign Minister S Jaishankar said on Monday that India has launched Operation Kaveri to rescue its citizens stranded from war-torn Sudan. Jaishankar said the government was "committed to assist all our brethren in Sudan". The government said it was focusing on the safety of over 3,000 Indian citizens presently located throughout Sudan.

India said on Sunday that it had positioned two transport aircraft of the Indian Air Force in the Saudi Arabian city of Jeddah and a naval ship at a key port in Sudan as part of its contingency plans to bring back stranded Indians. According to the MEA, there are risks and logistical challenges associated with overland movement, and Sudanese airspace remains closed to all foreign aircraft. It stated that the security situation in Sudan remained "volatile" despite reports of intense fighting emanating from a variety of locations in Khartoum, the nation's capital.

For the past 12 days, the Sudanese army and a paramilitary group have been engaged in bloody combat, reportedly killing over 400 people.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Udai Tambar, Indian-origin CEO on racial justice advisory board New York

Udai Tambar, an Indian-origin CEO involved in youth development services in the US, is among 15 experts appointed as members of the newly-formed racial justice advisory board in New York City.

Tambar, the CEO and President of New York Junior Tennis and Learning (NYJTL) was named as a member of the advisory board on implementation of the Racial Justice Charter Amendments, launched last week by Mayor Eric Adams and Mayor's Office of Equity Commissioner Sideya Sherman.

The board will help ensure that New York City continues to lead the nation in innovative, racial equity work and carries out the city's newly enshrined charter changes, according to a statement by the Mayor's office.

Tambar most recently served as Vice President of Community Health at Northwell Health and is currently the President & CEO of NYJTL, the largest nonprofit youth tennis and education programme in the US.

He has devoted much of his career to serving youth, including serving as Chief of Staff and Director of Youth & Children Services for the NYC Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services and as the Executive Director for South Asian Youth Action (SAYA!), which provides comprehensive youth development services for NYC's under-resourced South Asian community.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Delegate's Day

Every year on April 25th, International Delegate's Day is observed to pay tribute to the delegates who are an integral part of the United Nations (UN) and play a significant role in its functioning.

Delegates bring the United Nations to life. Without them, this Organization would not be what it is. They negotiate agreements and coordinate with their home countries. Some form alliances, others struggle for compromises. In that way, they embody the multilateralism, which the UN stands for.

The delegates represent their countries in meetings at the United Nations. Unless a politician of higher rank is present, the delegates speak and vote on behalf of their country at the UN General Assembly, and other fora, such as the UN Security Council. The delegates are appointed by their countries. Hence, they follow the interests of the government they serve.

International Delegate's Day marks the anniversary of the first day of the San Francisco Conference, also known as the United Nations Conference on International Organization. On 25 April 1945, delegates from fifty countries came together for the first time in San Francisco. Coming together after the devastation of the second world war, their aim was to set up an organization that would restore world peace and impose rules on the post-war world order.

World Malaria Day

World Malaria Day is an occasion to highlight the need for continued investment and sustained political commitment for malaria prevention and control. It was instituted by WHO Member States during the World Health Assembly of 2007.

The theme for World Malaria Day 2023 is "Time to deliver zero malaria: invest, innovate, implement", emphasizing the urgency to invest resources, innovate strategies and implement actions towards achieving the goal of zero malaria

About: Malaria - Malaria is an acute febrile illness caused by Plasmodium parasites, which are spread to people through the bites of infected female Anopheles mosquitoes. It is preventable and curable.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Ratan Tata receives highest Australian civil honour

Industrialist and Tata Sons' chairman emeritus Ratan Tata has been conferred with the Order of Australia, the highest Australian civil honour. Australian Ambassador to India Barry O' Farrell confirmed the development on Twitter over the weekend and hailed Tata as "a titan of business, industry and philanthropy". He said Tata's contributions have made a significant impact in Australia.

The Order of Australia honour comes a month after the industrialist was appointed as an Honorary Officer in the General Division of the Order of Australia (AO) for his service to foster Indo-Australia ties, specifically in trade, investment, and philanthropy. Known for his humility, Ratan Tata took charge as the chairman of the group in March 1991 and stepped down in 2012.

About: Order of Australia - The Order of Australia is an honour that recognises Australian citizens and other persons for outstanding achievement and service. It was established on 14 February 1975 by Elizabeth II, Queen of Australia, on the advice of the Australian Government.

RANKING

India ranks 4th on list of countries with largest military spending in the world: SIPRI

India's military spending was up 6 per cent year-on-year to \$81.4 billion in 2022, making it the fourth highest spender after the US, Russia, and China, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

While Beijing spent an estimated \$292 billion in 2022, Moscow's military expenditure stood at \$86.4 billion during the same period. However, the US outpaced other countries in terms of defence spending with a bill of \$877 billion, according to the report

Saudi Arabia rounded the top five with an annual expenditure of \$70 billion. Total military spending surged to \$2,240 billion in 2022.

India slipped a spot from last year in terms of military spending. Meanwhile, the US remains the world's largest military spender equalling the expenditure of nearly 10-15 countries. China also slipped from the second spot having spent nearly \$400 billion, with some amount remaining undeclared.

Russia rose to the second spot in these rankings owing to the war with Ukraine. In what is the first war of attrition since the Second World War in Europe, Ukraine has spent nearly 40 per cent of its GDP on defence, according to the report.

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NATIONAL

NHAI to develop 10,000 kms of 'Digital Highways' in India by 2025

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is set to develop around 10,000 kilometres of Optic Fibre Cables (OFC) infrastructure across India by the fiscal year 2025, an official statement has said.

State-owned NHAI's special purpose vehicle National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML) will be handling the project of implementing the network of "digital highways" by developing integrated utility corridors along the national highways to develop Optic Fibre Cables infrastructure.

As per the report, around 512 km on the Hyderabad-Bangalore corridor and 1,367 kms on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway have been identified by the authority to carry out the pilot tracks for the development of digital highways.

The OFC network will facilitate internet connectivity to remote regions across India and will assist in accelerating country's shift to the modern-age telecommunication technologies like 5G & 6G. The 246-km Delhi-Dausa-Lalsot section of the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway was recently inaugurated. The track features 3-meter dedicated utility corridor which will be used for the purpose of laying optical fibre cables. This will play the key role for rolling-out 5G facility in the region.

DRDO, Indian Navy conducts successful trial of interceptor missile from naval platform

The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Navy successfully conducted a maiden flight trial of a sea-based interceptor missile off the coast of Odisha in Bay of Bengal,

The purpose of the trial was to engage and neutralise a hostile ballistic missile threat, thereby elevating India into the elite club of nations having Naval BMD capability,

Note: An interceptor missile is a light high-speed fast-climbing fighter missile designed for defense against raiding bombers or missiles.

SPORTS

SCG unveils gates named after Tendulkar and Lara

The Sydney Cricket Ground has unveiled a set of gates named after Sachin Tendulkar and Brian Lara on Monday. They join Donald Bradman, Alan Davidson and Arthur Morris, all New South Wales (and Australia) legends in being honoured thus at the iconic SCG.

April 24 was chosen as the date to unveil the gates to mark Tendulkar's 50th birthday, and also the 30th anniversary of Lara's 277 at the SCG, his first Test century, though that Test was played in January 1993.

The gates were unveiled by SCG and Venues NSW Chairman Rod McGeoch AO, and CEO Kerrie Mather, as well as Cricket Australia CEO Nick Hockley.

Sachin Tendulkar's record at the SCG is simply remarkable, while Brian Lara's maiden Test century remains one of the most celebrated innings by a visiting player, Both players continue to hold a deep affection for the SCG and they remain hugely popular whenever they visit Sydney.

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Panchayati Raj Day: India

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh is commemorating National Panchayati Raj Day (NPRD) on 24th April, 2023 at Rewa in Madhya Pradesh as a major event as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) – Samaaveshi Vikaas (Inclusive Development) adopting Whole-of-the-Government approach.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be the Chief Guest at the national function to be organised at Special Armed Forces Ground, Rewa, Madhya Pradesh. He will address all the Gram Sabhas and Panchayati Raj Institutions of the country today at National Panchayati Raj Day celebrations in Rewa, Madhya Pradesh. The Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone and inaugurate projects worth more than 17 thousand crores.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will virtually attend the house warming ceremony of 4 lakh 11 thousand beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana at the function.

Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Central Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Minister Giriraj Singh, several Union ministers and MP government ministers will also participate in the programme.

International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace

The International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace is celebrated annually on 24 April. It seeks to reaffirm the UN Charter and its principles of resolving disputes among countries through peaceful means. The Day acknowledges the use of multilateral decision making and diplomacy in achieving peaceful resolutions to conflicts among nations, It was established on 12 December 2018 through resolution A/RES/73/127 and was first observed on 24 April 2019.

What is multilateralism: Multilateralism is a philosophy or approach to international relations that emphasizes the need for cooperation and coordination among multiple countries and international organizations to address global issues and achieve common goals. It involves the idea that no single country can solve complex global problems such as climate change, international trade.

World Immunization Week 24-30 April 2023

World Immunisation Week (WIW) is a global healthcare event, typically celebrated every year in the last week of April between 24th and 30th, intending to promote vaccine usage and protect people of all ages from infectious diseases.

The World Health Organisation (WHO), in association with various international and local groups, joined hands together in this worldwide event to protect local communities from vaccine-preventable diseases and provide education by conducting various campaigns and activities. The WIW 2023 activities focus on emphasising the importance of having vaccines and immunisation in addition to aiding the governments in providing the necessary technical assistance and information required to launch effective immunisation programmes.

Infectious diseases caused by viruses or bacteria that can be prevented through vaccination are known as vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs). These VPDs are still one of the major culprits for causing deaths in children under the age of 5 years. Immunisation can help curb VPDs in children and other infectious diseases in adults, including polio, diphtheria, tetanus, COVID-19 etc.

World Immunization Week 2023 Theme: This year 2023, the World Immunisation Week theme is "The Big Catch-Up" where the World Health Organization is collaborating with its partners to swiften the progress in countries' back to on track, so that more people, especially children, are shielded from avoidable diseases.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

First G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank governors meeting to begin in Bengaluru: April 24

The First G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG) meeting begin today in Bengaluru. The two-day meeting, under the G20 Indian Presidency, is jointly chaired by Union Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman and Governor, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Dr Shaktikanta Das.

The 1st G20 FMCBG meeting will see the participation of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of the G20 members, invitee members and heads of International Organisations. The meeting will be deliberated on issues such as strengthening multilateral development banks to address shared global challenges of the 21st century, financing for resilient, inclusive and sustainable cities of tomorrow. Issues of Digital Public Infrastructure for advancing financial inclusion and productivity gains will also be discussed. The sessions will also cover issues related to global economy, global health, and international taxation.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Canara Bank has partnered with Reserve Bank of India innovation hub

Canara Bank, in collaboration with Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), has announced the launch of "Digitalised Submission of Form 15G/15H" as one of customer friendly services adding to our pursuit of "Customer Delight".

Form 15G (Individual and HUF) and Form 15H (Individual-Senior Citizen) are self-declaration forms that an individual submits to the bank requesting not to deduct TDS on interest income as their income is below the basic exemption limit. For this, providing PAN is compulsory.

At the start of every financial year, especially in the first few weeks of April, several citizens - especially senior citizens - make their 15G & 15H submissions to their banks.

Presently, our Bank is accepting submission of these forms through online Banking/ Mobile banking which requires knowledge and access to Mobile / Internet Banking.

Many Senior citizens are not conversant with Internet / Mobile banking applications. They stand in long queues all day to make submissions of these Tax waiver forms in the bank branches.

RBIH (Reserve Bank Innovation Hub) identified the problem, consulted several Banks for potential solutions and then, conceptualised and created a blueprint to address the above issue.

Current Affairs PDF- April 23, 2023

INTERNATIONAL

Oliver Dowden appointed as UK's new deputy prime minister

Oliver Dowden, a long-term ally of Rishi Sunak, has been appointed as the new deputy prime minister following Dominic Raab's resignation over a damning report into his conduct.

Oliver Dowden has been the MP for Hertsmere, in Hertfordshire, since 2015. Before becoming an MP, Dowden worked for PR firm Hill & Knowlton and as former prime minister David Cameron's deputy chief of staff.

He was appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on October 25, 2022, before being appointed Secretary of State in the Cabinet Office in February 2023.

Mr Dowden is a key ally of Rishi Sunak, and was a vocal backer for Mr Sunak in both Tory leadership contests last year.

Over the years, the newly chosen deputy prime minister was previously Minister without Portfolio, Cabinet Office between September 2021 and June 2022. Before that, he was Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport between February 2020 and September 2021.

His career harks back even earlier, with other roles in the Cabinet Office, such as paymaster general and minister, and parliamentary secretary.

NATIONAL

PM Modi to release Rs 100 coin to mark 100 episodes of Mann Ki Baat

The government will release a new Rs 100 coin this Sunday, April 30, to commemorate the 100th episode of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's radio show Mann Ki Baat. The coins will be minted under the authority of the central government.

The new coin of Rs 100 will be 44 mm in size. It is made from four metals – silver (50 percent), copper (40 percent), nickel (0.5 percent) and zinc (0.5 percent).

The face of the coin will bear the Lion Capital of Ashoka Pillar in the centre. 'Satyamev Jayate' will be inscribed below it. On its left side, the word 'Bharat' in Devanagari script will be inscribed, while on the right side, 'India' in English will be written.

The coin will also bear the Rupee symbol "₹" and the denominational value "100" will be mentioned in the international numerals below the Lion Capital.

IGGL completes Asia's largest underwater hydrocarbon pipeline

Asia's largest underwater hydro-carbon pipeline, below the river Brahmaputra connecting Jorhat and Majuli in Assam has been completed by the Indradhanush Gas Grid Limited (IGGL), the company's CEO Ajit Kumar Thakur said on Saturday. The challenging task of laying a 24-inch diameter hydrocarbon pipeline beneath the mighty Brahmaputra river by Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) method was completed on Friday, marking the completion of a major milestone in the construction of the North East Gas Grid (NEGG) connecting North East India to the National Gas Grid.

The total length of the pipeline in this single HDD crossing is 4,080 metre across the main water channel of Brahmaputra river. This is the longest river crossing by any hydrocarbon pipeline of size 24-inch diameter and above in Asia and the second longest in the world,

IMPORTANT DAYS

English Language Day

English Language Day coincides with both the birthday and death day of William Shakespeare and World Book Day that is 23 April . The English language is one of the most popular languages used across the world. The day prospects the development, history, culture, and achievements associated with the language.

English is the most widely spoken language or a "world language". Therefore, it is known as the lingua franca of the modern era. Along with French, English is also the working language of the United Nations (UN). English Language Day is the result of a 2010 initiative by the Department of Global Communications. It established language days for each of the Organisation's six official languages.

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The language days are as follows:

- Arabic (18 December)
- Chinese (20 April)
- English (23 April)
- French (20 March)
- Russian (6 June)
- Spanish (23 April)

The main purpose of the UN's language days is to observe multilingualism and cultural diversity. The days also promote the equal use of all six official languages throughout the Organisation.

At the UN, the Language days aims to entertain and to inform about the goal of raising awareness and respect for the history, culture, and achievements of each of the six working languages among the UN community.

Basav Jayanti: 2023

In memory of Lord Basavanna's birthday, Lingayats in the states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Maharashtra observe the festival known as Basava Jayanti. The

birth of Lord Basavanna, who is regarded as the founder of the Lingayat community, is celebrated to commemorate the beginning of a new era known as the Basavanna or Basaveshwar era.

In Karnataka, where Basavanna has a sizable following, Basava Jayanti has been proclaimed a state holiday. People from different cities and villages in Karnataka celebrate it grandly. People come to the Lord Basaveshwar temples on this day to offer prayers. It's a significant day, particularly for farmers. The practice of Lingayat committees organising various events is widespread in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. On Basava Jayanti, people exchange pleasantries and sweets. Many people choose to travel to Kudalasangama, which holds numerous cultural and spiritual events over a week-long period for the Basav Jayanti celebration.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

SAIL-BSL signs MoU with Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL)

SAIL-Bokaro Steel Plant (BSL) has entered into an MoU with Telecommunications Consultants India Limited (TCIL) to explore potential of application of 5G/ IT/ Telecom and other wireless communication technologies in SAIL-Bokaro Steel Plant including SAIL's Mines & Collieries, Central Coal Supply Organization and the SAIL Refractory Unit in Jharkhand. The MoU was signed at SAIL's Bokaro Steel Plant on 21st April, 2023. From SAIL-BSL side B.K.Tiwari, Executive Director (Works) and from TCIL side Ms Alka Selot Asthana, Executive Director (IT & Telecom) signed the MOU in the presence of senior officials from both the organizations.

SAIL-BSL has taken this initiative of becoming the first PSU in the country to take initiative for setting up a dedicated 5G network with the help of TCIL which will pave way for application of 5G/ IT / Telecom technologies in Steel manufacturing. Besides steel plant, this partnership will also be useful in providing innovative solutions in SAIL Mines and Collieries in Jharkhand, Smart Cities etc.

EAM Dr S Jaishankar co-chairs 5th India-Guyana Joint Commission

External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar co-chaired the 5th India-Guyana Joint Commission Meeting with Foreign Minister Hugh Todd. In a tweet, he said, there was comprehensive discussions on agriculture, energy, health and pharmaceuticals, ayurveda and wellness, defence cooperation, human resources, technology and innovation and infrastructure development.

Dr Jaishankar also witnessed exchange of agreements in Migration and Mobility and Air Connectivity. The External Affairs Minister also addressed the India-Guyana Business Round Table. He also called on Prime Minister of Guyana Mark Phillips.

RANKING

India reaches 38th spot on World Bank's Logistics Performance Index

India has reached the 38th spot on World Bank's Logistics Performance Index. In 2014, India was ranked 54th. It climbed 16 places from 2014 to 2022. Prime Minister Narendra Modi termed it an encouraging trend, powered by government reforms and focus on improving logistics infrastructure. In a tweet, he said these gains will reduce costs and make country's businesses more competitive.