

Weekly Current Affairs PDF July 02 to July 08, 2023

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INTERNATIONAL

67th TAAI Convention held in Colombo

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

NATIONAL

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

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

- In a major step towards promoting digitisation and in sync with Digital India mission, Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh launched an NCC Integrated Software in New Delhi on 07 July 2023. The NCC Integrated Software, developed in partnership with Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo Informatics (BISAG), is a single window interactive software for Cadets, designed on the 'Entry to Exit Model'.
- The NCC Integrated Software is based on the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Once a Cadet always a cadet", and will digitalize the entire process from the stage of enrolment.
- as a cadet in NCC till exit registration as alumni. This will enable seamless issue of certificates, creation of an all India database of NCC cadets at the time of their employment.
- During this event, the NCC and State Bank of India (SBI) also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the presence of Raksha Mantri to open zero balance accounts of all NCC Cadets with debit card, chequebook & passbook facility under SBI's "Pahli Udaan" scheme. About 5 lakh cadets will be benefitted by this MoU every year.
- The account will remain functional till completion of training or attaining 18 years of age whichever is later. This will not only introduce the cadets to the national banking system but also provide them with a ready platform to avail benefit of other govt schemes through DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) of funds into their accounts.

Shravani Mela inaugurated in Deogha Jharkhand

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

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

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

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

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

OBITUARY

Legendary artist, illustrator and sculptor Namboothiri passes away at 97

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

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

- Major Bakhtawar Singh Brar (retd), one of the oldest veterans of the Kumaon Regiment in the Indian Army, passed away on Monday in the US. He was 109. The news about Major Brar's death was tweeted by author Jai Samota and confirmed by Colonel NN Bhatia (retd), a veteran of the Kumaon Regiment who is well-versed in the history of the regiment
- Born in November 1913 in Faridkot district, Major Brar served in the Faridkot State Forces and then joined the 6 Kumaon Regiment, before retiring in 1963.

- In 1934, Major Brar joined the State Forces of Maharaja of Faridkot. He was awarded the Mention-in-Despatches by the King of England in 1942 for leading his company against the Pathans in Waziristan
- Major Brar was commissioned into the 6 Kumaon Regiment in 1945 and saw action in World War II in Burma. On November 8, 1957, he was tasked with snow clearance in the rescue operation in Baltal and was again awarded Mention-in-Despatches.
- In 1959, he led a contingent of 6 Kumaon at the Republic Day Parade. He also received the Chief of Army Staff 'Commendation Card' for his service in Jammu and Kashmir in 1960. In March 1960, he was posted to the 111 Infantry Battalion (TA).

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

RBI appoints P. Vasudevan as new executive director

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

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

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

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

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

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

- NLC India Limited (NLCIL), a Navratna company under the Ministry of Coal, bagged GeM award in the category "Timely Payments (CPSEs)" for the year 2023 for its outstanding contribution in improving the reliability of e-market practices in line with the vision of GeM. NLC India Limited registered and on-boarded in the GeM portal in the year 2017.
- NLC India Limited's growth in GeM procurement started from a small value of Rs 2.21 crore during the year 2018-19 and the company has registered an impressive growth of Rs 984.93 crore during the year FY 2022-23. Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is a dedicated e-Market
- service platform, a National public procurement portal, governed by Government of India for marketing different goods and services.
- To promote the power market in line with GEM's vision of transparent, inclusive and efficient public procurement in India, awards are being presented by the Government of India.

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INTERNATIONAL

India-UK Electric Propulsion Technical Workshop held in New Delhi

- An India-UK Electric Propulsion Technical Workshop to foster collaboration, exchange knowledge, and explore the exciting possibilities in the field of electric propulsion was organized in New Delhi on 3 July 2023. The day-long workshop was co-chaired by Shri Rajeev Prakash, Joint Secretary (Naval Systems) from the Indian side, and Commodore John Voyce, Naval Base Commander Portsmouth from the UK side.
- The workshop served as a crucial platform for experts, researchers, and industry professionals from both countries to come together, share insights, and engage in meaningful discussions on the development of electric propulsion for ships.
- The interaction and discussions provided a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, paving the way for collaboration and the exchange of ideas.
- During the workshop, both sides expressed their commitment to forging strong defense ties and exploring avenues for joint research, technology transfer, and strategic partnerships.

Indian Navy and US Navy Conduct SALVEX Exercise in Kochi

- The Seventh edition of Indian Navy – US Navy (IN – USN) Salvage and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) exercise, SALVEX was conducted from 26 Jun – 06 Jul 23 at Kochi. IN and USN have been participating in joint Salvage and EOD exercises since 2005. The exercise saw participation from both the navies which included the ships – INS Nireekshak and USNS Salvor in addition to Specialist Diving and EOD teams.

- Spanning over 10 days, the Diving teams of both the countries shared experiences on Maritime Salvage and trained together in various facets of EOD Operations on land as well at sea. SALVEX also saw conduct of joint training exercises towards enhancing interoperability, cohesiveness and gaining from best practices mutually in Maritime Salvage and EOD operations.
- The constructive engagements on operational terms enhanced the skill-sets of the Diving teams in a number of diverse disciplines such as mine detection and neutralisation, wreck location and salvage.

NATIONAL

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

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

SPORTS

Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal shocking retirement

- Bangladesh one-day captain Tamim Iqbal announced his shock retirement from international cricket on Thursday, three months before the team begins its 50-overs World Cup campaign in India.
- The 34-year-old was in tears as he announced his decision to end his 16-year international career in a news conference.
- Bangladesh, whose World Cup campaign begins on October 7 against Afghanistan in Dharamsala, is yet to reveal who will lead the side after Tamim's exit.
- A leading contender is Shakib Al Hasan, who captains the T20 side. Left-handed opener Tamim has scored 15,000-plus runs in international cricket, including 25 centuries.
- His ODI tally of 8,313 runs is the highest by a Bangladesh batsman and his 14 centuries in this format is also higher than any of his compatriots.
- Tamim skipped the one-off Test against Afghanistan last month with a stiff back and scored 13 in Wednesday's one-day international against Afghanistan in Chattogram, in what turned out his last international outing.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

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

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

Justice Sheo Kumar Singh becomes NGT acting chairman

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

FPSB India appoints Krishna Mishra as CEO

- The Financial Planning Standards Board (FPSB) of India appointed Krishna Mishra as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with effect from 1 August 2023. FPSB India is the Indian subsidiary of FPSB, a global standard-setting organization for the financial planning profession.

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

IMPORTANT DAYS

Kiswahili Language Day

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

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

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

- The Urban 20 (U20) Mayoral Summit will begin today in the twin cities of Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar. Delegates and participants from 57 cities across the world and 35 cities from India will participate in the two-day summit. U20 is an Engagement Group under India's G20 presidency. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Kaushal Kishore will inaugurate the summit.
- Akashvani correspondent reports that thematic sessions on the six U20 priority areas including environmental responsibility, climate finance, and water security will be organized during the summit. Mayors from across the world and Indian cities will share experiences of their respective city-level actions and initiatives. Over 500 participants, including Mayors, Deputy Mayors, city officials, and knowledge partners will attend the summit.
- The event will also host an exhibition showcasing India's urban story, especially city-level success, notable projects, and innovative initiatives. The key outcome of the U20 Mayoral Summit is the handover of the U20 Communiqué by the attending Mayors to the G20 leaders. The U20 Communiqué is an action-oriented collaboratively prepared document that brings to the fore the role that cities can play in taking forward the G20 agenda.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

British National Award for director Shekhar Kapur

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

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INTERNATIONAL

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

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

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

- The seventh edition of the bilateral Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2023 (JIMEX 23) hosted by the Indian Navy, is being conducted at/ off Visakhapatnam from 05 -10 July 2023. This edition marks the 11th anniversary of JIMEX, since its inception in 2012.
- Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) units under the command of RAdm Nishiyama Takahiro, Commander Escort Flotilla One, and Indian Naval ships under the command of RAdm Gurcharan Singh, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet are participating in the exercise.
- JIMEX 23 will witness the participation of INS Delhi, India's first indigenously built Guided Missile Destroyer, INS Kamorta, an indigenously designed and built Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette, fleet tanker INS Shakti, a submarine, maritime patrol aircraft P8I and Dornier, ship-borne helicopters and fighter aircraft. JMSDF will be represented by the guided missile destroyer JS Samidare and its integral helicopters.
- The exercise will be conducted over six days in two phases - a Harbour Phase at Visakhapatnam comprising professional, sports and social interactions, after which, the two navies will jointly hone their warfighting skills at sea and enhance their interoperability through complex multi-discipline operations in the surface, sub-surface and air domains.

NATIONAL

Gujarat govt doubles insurance cover under Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya scheme

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

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

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

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

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

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

former US President Donald Trump's presidency who openly conjectured about taking the US out of NATO.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

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

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

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

- As part of India's G20 Presidency, the fourth edition of the Space Economy Leaders Meeting began in Bengaluru today, July 6. Addressing the delegates during the inaugural event, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh said that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Indian Space programme's benefits were extended to neighbouring friendly countries and as part of space sector reforms, the private partnership was encouraged in this sector. He said that due to this decision, 140 start-ups have come up by successfully contributing to the Indian space programme.
- Jitendra Singh said that the space programmes in the country have experienced a quantum jump in the last eight to nine years. India is today a frontline nation through its Chandrayaan and Gaganyaan programmes.
- The two-day meeting on the theme 'Towards a New Space Era has participation from the Heads of National Space Agencies, leaders of space industries of G20 Countries and various guest nations. It will discuss the responsibilities of the space faring nations for an enhanced share of space economy in the global economy. The Chairman of ISRO Somnath S, IN-SPACe Chairman Dr. Pawan Goenka and G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant also spoke on the occasion.

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

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

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Bank of India rolls out Mahila Samman Savings Certificate

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

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

- IDFC First Bank and IDFC Ltd have announced their merger plans, with a share exchange ratio of 155 equity shares of IDFC First Bank for every 100 equity shares of IDFC. The merger aims to simplify the corporate structure, increase the book value per share, and streamline regulatory compliances. The merger is expected to be completed in the current financial year, subject to unforeseen circumstances.
- In March 2023, IDFC Ltd and IDFC Financial Holding Company Ltd appointed Axis Capital Ltd to determine the fairness of the share exchange ratio for the merger. The companies have completed all stages of corporate simplifications, with the amalgamation with IDFC First Bank being the next step. To facilitate the merger, registered valuers and legal experts were appointed to provide recommendations and conduct due diligence.

- The merger is expected to increase the book value per share of IDFC First Bank by 4.9 percent, based on audited financials as of March 31, 2023. It will consolidate IDFC FHCL, IDFC Limited, and IDFC First Bank into a single entity, simplifying the corporate structure. Additionally, the merger will result in a diversified shareholder base, similar to other large private sector banks, with no promoter holding.

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NATIONAL

Narendra Singh Tomar inaugurated International Hostel - Madhumaas at IARI

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

Raksha Rajya Mantri inaugurates CSD Depot in Ambala

- Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Ajay Bhatt inaugurated new premises of the Canteen Store Department (CSD) Depot at Ambala on July 05, 2023. The premises has been constructed by Dedicated Freight Corridor India Limited under the Railway Ministry, in exchange of the land of the old CSD depot.
- Speaking on the occasion, RRM appreciated the work being done by CSD in realizing PM's vision of automation and ease of doing business by providing excellent service to the armed forces, veterans, and their families. He congratulated the department for completing 75 years of service to the armed forces and their families.
- Established in 1948, CSD has 34 regional depots spread all over the country. "The contribution of the department in ensuring uninterrupted supply of essential commodities to the beneficiaries during the pandemic has been exemplary and commendable," he said.
- He also praised the Indian Railways for undertaking projects to boost the economy of the country.

SPORTS

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

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

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

- India defeated Kuwait by 5-4 in the penalty shootout of the final of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru. The match ended 1-1 in regulation time of the summit clash, which led to players from both the sides to take penalty shots from the spot for the coveted title.
- After five rounds of penalty kicks, the scoreline remained 4-4 and sudden death rule was applied.
- Mahesh Naorem scored but Sandhu saved Kuwait captain Khaled Hajiah's shot to the wild celebration of the home fans and at the India dug out.
- In the regulation time, Shabaib Al Khaldi had put Kuwait in the lead in the 14th minute before Lallianzuala Chhangte equalised in the 39th minute.
- This was the second time India won in the penalty shootout. They had made it to Tuesday's summit clash after beating Lebanon 4-2 in penalty shootout in the semifinal on July 1. Sandhu had also made a crucial save in the shootout then.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

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

- Lt Gen MU Nair has been appointed the new National Cyber Security Coordinator (NCSC) replacing Lt Gen (retd.) Dr Rajesh Pant on Monday. Lt Gen Nair previously held the chair of Signal-officer-in-Chief at the Army Headquarters.
- About: Lt Gen MU Nair - Lt Gen MU Nair, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal, Sena Medal, is appointed as the head of the National Cyber Coordination Centre (NCCC).
- He is India's third cyber security chief after Lt Gen (retd.) Dr Rajesh Pant and first chief Gulshan Rai.
- Lt Gen MU Nair is an alumnus of the prestigious National Defence Academy.

- He has also held other important positions including the additional director general, signal intelligence, chief of staff of a corps and command.
- Nair has rich expertise in cyber warfare, signal intelligence and communication & information technology at the domestic and global levels.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

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

- Rad Al Khaimah Economic Zone (RAKEZ) and the Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture (ICFA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at promoting mutual growth and development in the food and agriculture sector of the UAE and India.
- The agreement, signed by RAKEZ Group CEO Ramy Jallad and ICFA Chairman Dr. MJ Khan, is intended to strengthen the strategic collaboration between the two countries. The partnership also aims to facilitate knowledge exchange, trade promotion, investment, and research and development collaboration.
- India, being one of the UAE's largest trading partners, brings valuable innovation and expertise in the food and agriculture sectors, particularly in sustainable farming and food processing technologies.
- The collaboration aims to provide opportunities for knowledge exchange and capacity-building, allowing tech and agricultural companies in the RAKEZ business community to enhance their methods and share innovative, sustainable farming techniques with major Indian companies.

India Post & Canada Post signed a bilateral Tracked Packet agreement

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

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

- The International Conference on Green Hydrogen is being organised by the Government of India during 5th-7th July 2023 in New Delhi. It aims to bring together the global scientific, policy, academic and industrial leaders to discuss recent advances and emerging technologies in the entire green hydrogen value chain.

- The event is expected to enable the sector stakeholders to explore the evolving green hydrogen landscape and innovation-driven solutions in the sector. In this way, it aims at strengthening the sustainability ecosystem of the sector.
- Organized by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in partnership with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and Office of Principal Scientific Advisor to Government of India in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the event will be inaugurated by R K Singh, Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy.

DGCA signs pact with EU aviation safety agency on drones

- The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) to cooperate on unmanned aircraft systems and innovative air mobility.
- The MoU follows a letter of intent (LoI) that was signed during the EU-India Aviation Summit in New Delhi on April 20, 2023. The MoU will focus on collaboration on unmanned aircraft and innovative air mobility between the two civil aviation authorities, according to a press release.
- It is to ensure regular information sharing on technological developments and research in this area. According to the Aviation Ministry, the MoU will result in conferences, workshops, training programmes conducted by DGCA and EASA.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

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

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

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INTERNATIONAL

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

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

NATIONAL

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

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

SPORTS

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

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

Verstappen. Meanwhile, Sergio Perez secured the third position, finishing 17.2 seconds behind the leader.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

PM Prasad takes over as Coal India chairman

- Coal India's (CIL) newly-appointed chairman and managing director (CMD) PM Prasad on Saturday, while assuming charge, said that uninterrupted coal supply to the power sector is among the top priorities of the public sector coal mining major,
- Prior to taking charge as Coal India CMD, he led the Jharkhand based Central Coalfields Ltd, a Coal India, subsidiary, to its production target achievement in FY23.
- He has an over 30-year experience in the coal mining sector, and is a post-graduate in mining engineering from Indian School of Mines IIT Dhanbad. He succeeds Pramod Agrawal who stepped down on 30 June on attaining the age of superannuation.

Centre re-appoints Tushar Mehta as Solicitor General of India

- The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet on Friday re-appointed Tushar Mehta as the Solicitor-General of India.
- Besides Mehta, six Additional Solicitor Generals of India – namely, Vikramjit Banerjee, K.M Nataraj, Balbir Singh, S.V Raju, N. Venkataraman, and Aishwariya Bhati – were re-appointed.
- The term for all the law officers is that of three years, or until further notice, whichever should be earlier.
- About: Tushar Mehta - Tushar Mehta is a senior counsel in India and is currently serving as the Solicitor General of India. Mehta attended the Gujarat University, where he obtained his law degree and received five gold medals. He has also received honorary doctorates from Amity University, Noida and Karnataka State Law University.

SBI appoints Kameshwar Rao Kodavanti as CFO

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

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

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

- A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on 2 June, 2023 between the Indian Coast Guard, Indian Navy, and Indian Port Rail and Ropeway Corporation (IPRCL) for

the construction, and commissioning of a gallery at the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) in Lothal, Gujarat.

- The signing of the MoU took place in the presence of Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW), Sarbananda Sonowal and Chief Minister of Gujarat, Bhupendra Patel.
- The gallery will be based on the theme 'Evolution of the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard' at the NMHC. It will comprise a maritime museum, a lighthouse museum, maritime theme parks, amusement park centres, adopting an edutainment approach using the latest technology.

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

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

UAE-India Economic Summit in Abu Dhabi

- The UAE-India Economic Summit, themed "Fostering Synergies—Uniting the Falcon and Tiger Economies," took place on July 3, 2023, at the ADGM Auditorium in Al Maryah Island, Abu Dhabi. The event, jointly hosted by SBI Capital Markets Limited (SBICAPS) and Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM), brought together industry leaders from India and the UAE, and marked the official opening of SBICAPS ADGM Branch Office.
- The summit featured engaging panel discussions on topics such as startups, sustainability, green energy, capital markets, and stressed asset resolution. Prominent figures in attendance included Dinesh Khara, Chairman of State Bank of India, Sunjay Sudhir, Indian Ambassador to UAE, Hamad Sayah Al Mazrouei, CEO of ADGM Registration Authority, along with senior representatives from ADGM and SBICAPS.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

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

- Public sector lender Indian Bank has unveiled new services under its digital transformation initiative — Project WAVE. Accordingly, the city-headquartered bank

in collaboration with National E-Governance Services Ltd, has introduced an electronic bank guarantee (e-BG) service to ease traditional paper-based processes.

- This move will also reduce the turn-around time of the bank guarantee issuance and delivery to the beneficiary from an industry average of 3-4 working days to a few minutes, Besides, the facility would replace the need for physical stamp paper and physical signatures of customers by replacing them with digital stamping and e-signing making the entire process digital.
- At an event held in Chennai recently, the bank's Managing Director and CEO S L Jain launched the digital services in the presence of senior executives.

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NATIONAL

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

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

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

- The Union Minister for Environment & Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment Shri Bhupender Yadav today – July 3. inaugurated the three-day celebration programme of the 108th ZSI day in Kolkata in presence of Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, Director General of Forests and Special Secretary, Shri Chandra Prakash Goyal, Director, Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) Dr Dhriti Banerjee and Director, Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Dr Ashiho Asosii Mao.
- he Minister categorically pointed out that we must protect the Indian faunal diversity to protect ourselves as climate change has busted the myth that humans are superior to nature.

- He gave an instance put forward by renowned Anthropologist Eduardo Kohn, who said forests can think as the trees interact with their environment because they have specialised characteristics of pest resistance. The forest characteristics, he said, remind us of what Gandhiji once said- 'In nature, there is enough for everyone's need'.
- The Union Minister gave the instance of discovery of DDT, the pesticide, during World War II and how the eminent biologist and conservationist Rachel Carson made people aware of the harm it causes to the environment in her book named 'Silent Spring' in 1958, a testimony to human arrogance towards nature.

SPORTS

132nd Durand Cup tournament organized in Kolkata

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

Yuki Bhambri wins maiden ATP doubles title in Spain

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

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

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

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

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

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

Vice Admiral Atul Anand takes over as Additional Secretary, DMA

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

- He has also served as Principal Director, Naval Operations and Principal Director, Strategy, Concepts and Transformation at Integrated Headquarters of Ministry of Defence (Navy). As a Flag Officer, he has served as Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Foreign, Cooperation and Intelligence); Deputy Commandant & Chief Instructor at National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla; Flag Officer Commanding Maharashtra Naval area; Flag Officer Commanding Karnataka Naval area and Director General Naval Operations.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Plastic Bag Free Day

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

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Two-day Startup20 Shikhar summit begins in Gurugram, Haryana

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

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

- The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice will hold a meeting on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) today.
- Committee head and BJP Rajya Sabha MP Sushil Modi informed that the panel will seek the views of the stakeholders on the matter. He added the meeting of the Committee is non-political as the panel has members from all political parties. The UCC proposes to formulate and implement personal laws of citizens which apply to

all citizens equally regardless of their religion, sex, gender and sexual orientation. Currently, the personal laws of various communities are governed by their religious scriptures.

- On the 14th of last month, the Law Commission of India solicited the views and ideas of the public and recognised religious organisations to examine the UCC. On the 14th of last month, the Law Commission of India solicited the views and ideas of the public and recognised religious organisations to examine the UCC.s,

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NATIONAL

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

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

India's first 'Police Drone Unit' launched in Chennai

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

SPORTS

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

- Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra obtained the top spot in Lausanne Diamond League 2023 with a best throw of 87.66 m . The star Indian player is coming back from a muscle injury he had sustained during training. The injury forced Chopra to withdraw from three events in the month of June namely FBK Games, Paavo Nurmi Games and the Ostrava Golden Spike.

- Neeraj Chopra looked a little out of sorts on his first attempt, which was ruled a foul. He opened his account with a throw of 83.52m in his second attempt, which put him in third place behind Julian Weber (86.20m) and Jakub Vadlejch (84.71m).
- Chopra moved into second place with a throw of 85.04m on his third attempt, just behind Weber, and had the chance to take the lead on his fourth attempt. However, the 25-year-old failed to make a mark on his fourth attempt.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Virgin Galactic completes first manned mission to space:

- Virgin Galactic, the space venture established by British entrepreneur Richard Branson, has achieved a significant milestone as it successfully completed its first manned mission to the edge of space. The inaugural commercial flight, which took place on June 29, marks a momentous achievement for Virgin Galactic after two decades of dedicated efforts
- the mission featured two Italian Air Force personnel who were funded by the organisation. Colonel Walter Villadei, who is also slated for a future paid SpaceX mission to orbit, and Lieutenant Colonel Angelo Landolfi, a physician trained as a crew surgeon for Russian cosmonauts, were among the passengers.
- Unlike its competitor Blue Origin, founded by Jeff Bezos, this particular mission had a research-oriented focus rather than catering to celebrities and affluent thrill-seekers, according to CNN. Nevertheless, future flights by Virgin Galactic are anticipated to encompass a diverse array of high-profile clientele.
- The journey unfolded in multiple stages, commencing at Virgin Galactic's spaceport in New Mexico. The passengers boarded VSS Unity, which was securely attached beneath the wing of the enormous twin-fuselage mothership known as VMS Eve.

OBITUARY

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

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

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

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

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

Anurag Verma assumes charge as Punjab chief secretary

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

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

PM Modi inaugurates 17th Indian Cooperative Congress

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

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

BANKING AND ECONOMY

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

- The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors today approved \$1.5 billion in financing to accelerate India's development of low-carbon energy. The financing will help India promote low-carbon energy by scaling up renewable energy, developing green hydrogen, and stimulating climate finance for low-carbon energy investments.
- India is one of the fastest-growing large economies in the world. While the country's energy consumption per capita is only one-third of the global average, India's energy demand is expected to grow rapidly as the economy expands. This calls for a phasing down of fossil-based energy sources in line with India's goal of achieving net-zero by 2070.
- The industrial sector is the main driver for future growth of energy demand and emissions, and green hydrogen can play a critical role in initially decarbonizing the hard-to-abate industrial sectors, such as fertilizer and refinery industries, and later heavy industries, including iron and steel. India has achieved impressive progress in renewable energy installed capacity and a decline in costs. Scaling up the production of renewable energy will accelerate the transition to low-carbon electricity and support the emergence and expansion of the green hydrogen sector.