

Weekly Current Affairs PDF June 25 to July 01, 2023

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INTERNATIONAL

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

- Beginning Saturday, New Zealand will become the first country to ban the thin plastic bags that supermarket customers use to collect their fruit and vegetables.
- The new ban will also extend to plastic straws and silverware, as the government expands a campaign against single-use plastics it started in 2019 when it banned the thicker plastic shopping bags that customers used to carry home their grocery items. These days, most customers bring their own reusable tote bags to stores.
- Officials estimate that on average, each New Zealander sends more than three-quarters of a ton of waste to landfills every year.
- "New Zealand produces too much waste, too much plastic waste," said Associate Environment Minister Rachel Brooking.
- Brooking said the 2019 bag ban had already prevented more than 1 billion plastic bags from being used in New Zealand, and the new ban on thin bags would add a further reduction of 150 million bags per year.

SPORTS

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

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

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Gernot Dollner succeeds Markus Duesmann as Chairman and CEO of Audi

- German luxury car brand Audi has announced that Gernot Dollner will take over from Markus Duesmann as Chairman of the Board of Management, effective September 1, 2023.
- Manfred Doss, Chairman of Audi's Supervisory Board said, "I would like to thank Markus Duesmann for all the important work he has done during his tenure at Audi. He has brought great foresight and vision to planning and driving forward key

strategic decisions, including, first and foremost, the electrification strategy. Audi will be able to build further on these cornerstones in the future

- Dollner holds a degree in mechanical engineering. He joined Volkswagen as a Ph.D. candidate in 1993 and subsequently served in a number of management roles at Porsche, including as head of Concept Development and head of the Panamera Series. Since 2021, he has overseen the Volkswagen Group's Product and Group Strategy and the General Secretariat.

TS Singh Deo appointed as Chhattisgarh's deputy chief minister

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

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Doctor's Day: India

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

Canada Day

- Canada is set to celebrate Canada Day 2023 with celebrations planned across the country. The day marks the country's confederation, which brought together the three provinces into a single Dominion within the British Empire in 1867. The day is celebrated with excitement and joy on 1 July as on this date Canada became a self-governing nation and a Constitution was enacted.

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

National Postal Worker Day

- National Postal Worker Day 2023: The special day dedicated to the hardships of the postal workers of the postal service department is celebrated every year. This is the day to respect their hard work and the extra mile that they go, literally, to ensure that we receive our letters on time. Before the age of telephones and the internet came in, the world heavily relied on letters for communication. Be it casual or formal communication, or reaching out to families from faraway lands, letters were the only way to communicate. The world depended heavily on the postal workers for the timely delivery of their letters to their loved ones, offices and families.
- History - In 1997, a postal carrier in the Seattle area started National Postal Worker Day to respect the efforts of his employees. Since then, National Postal Worker Day has been celebrated every year.
- Significance - The postal service is an outdoor job and brings with it its own set of challenges. From working in scorching heat to pouring rain, the postal workers ensure timely delivery of communication. This is the day to acknowledge their efforts and respect all that they do for us. Even though technology has made things easier over the last few years, it also brings the risk of malware and hacking. Postal service is a trusted form of sharing communication and ensures safe delivery of letters, without risks.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

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

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

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

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

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Mary Kom Named Global Indian Icon at UK-India Awards

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

BANKING AND ECONOMY

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

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

- Kotak RuPay Credit Card-UPI linkage will also provide customers with rewards and an interest-free credit period of up to 50 days

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NATIONAL

AP CM Launches Jagananna Amma Vodi Scheme

- Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy will release financial assistance of ₹6,392.94 crore under Jagananna Amma Vodi scheme. He will formally launch the programme at Kurupam of Parvathipuram Manyam district on Wednesday with the click of a button. The amount will be deposited into the bank accounts of 42,61,965 mothers. The process of depositing the financial assistance will be completed in 10 days. As many as 83,15,341 students of classes 1 to Intermediate will be benefited from the programme.
- This fourth year in a row the State government is providing financial assistance under the programme. The total financial assistance provided so far under the Jagananna Amma Vodi is ₹26,067.28 crore. This includes ₹6,392 crore of financial assistance being extended now. The identified beneficiaries can reach the Chief Minister via Jaganannaku Chebudam if they face any problems. They have to call a toll-free number 1902.
- The State government with an intention to reduce the dropout rate significantly in schools, has made 75% attendance mandatory for availing oneself of the benefits under "Jagananna Amma Vodi". The mothers should take the responsibility of sending their children to school regularly to ensure at least 75% attendance.
- The Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) of Andhra Pradesh for the year 2018 Primary Education was as low as 84.48 when compared to the national average of 99.21. Andhra Pradesh then was at the lowest place among 29 States. In the last 4 years, the State has witnessed a remarkable surge in GER from 84.48 to 100.8. The Government has decided to further improve the GER and to encourage the continuation of studies by the students who failed in Class 10th and Intermediate are readmitted to schools and colleges and are once again provided with Jagananna Amma Vodi benefit.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in valedictory function of Delhi University's centenary celebrations

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the valedictory Ceremony of the centenary celebrations of Delhi University today. Prime Minister will address the gathering on the occasion. In a tweet, Prime Minister said that he is looking forward to joining the University of Delhi's centenary celebrations. Mr Modi said, as a premier centre of learning, Delhi University has been nurturing talent and fostering intellectual growth for a century. He congratulated the DU fraternity on this milestone.

- During the programme, the Prime Minister will lay the foundation stone of the Delhi University Computer Centre and the building of the Faculty of Technology, and the Academic Block which will be built in the North Campus of the University.
- The University of Delhi was established on 1st May 1922. In the last hundred years, the University has grown and expanded immensely and now has 86 departments, and 90 Colleges. Over six lakh students have passed out from the University so far.

SPORTS

India beat Iran in final to win eighth title of the Asian Kabaddi Championship 2023

- India emerged victorious in the final of the Asian Kabaddi Championship 2023 held in Busan, Korea on 30th June defeating Iran with a score of 42-32.
- Kabaddi-Championship India emerged victorious in the final of the Asian Kabaddi Championship 2023 held in Busan, Korea on 30th June defeating Iran with a score of 42-32. This victory marks India's eighth title out of nine editions of the championship, highlighting their dominance in the sport.
- Pawan Sehrawat, the captain of the Indian team, played a crucial role by securing a super 10, leading the team to success. In the earlier league stage of the tournament, India showcased their prowess by defeating Hong Kong with a comprehensive scoreline of 64-20.
- Six teams, including India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Chinese Taipei, and Hong Kong, participated in the championship. India finished the league stage undefeated, winning all five matches and securing the top position in the points table. Iran, having only lost to India during the league stage, secured the second position and advanced to the final.
- The Indian kabaddi teams will now focus on the upcoming Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, scheduled from September 23 to October 8, where they will face a tough challenge from defending champions Iran, who defeated India in the semi-finals in Jakarta in 2018.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

IPS officer Ajay Bhatnagar appointed Special Director in CBI

- Senior IPS officer Ajay Bhatnagar has been appointed as Special Director in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), according to a Personnel Ministry order.
- Bhatnagar, a 1989 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of Jharkhand cadre, is currently Additional Director in the federal probe agency. He has been appointed to the post till the date of his superannuation on November 20, 2024.
- Anurag, who was previously Joint Director in the CBI, has been promoted to the role of Additional Director in the agency for a period until July 24, 2023, which completes his seven-year tenure.
- Manoj Sashidhar, a 1994 batch IPS officer from Gujarat cadre, has been appointed as Additional Director in the CBI for a three-year term. He is currently serving as Joint Director in the agency.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has granted an extension in the deputation tenure of Sharad Agarwal, Joint Director of the CBI, for one year beyond May 31, 2023.

- The Central Bureau of Investigation plays a crucial role in tackling high-profile cases, maintaining national security, and upholding the rule of law in India.
- The appointments and extensions in the CBI are part of the ongoing efforts to strengthen the agency's capabilities and ensure its effectiveness in serving the nation's interests.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of Parliamentarism

- Today, June 30, marks the annual celebration of the International Day of Parliamentarism, commemorating the founding of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in 1889. This special day, established by a United Nations General Assembly Resolution in 2018, serves as an opportunity to reflect on the progress made by parliaments worldwide in achieving predetermined goals.
- History - The inaugural UN International Day of Parliamentarism was celebrated in 1899 upon the establishment of the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Subsequently, the day was officially designated in 2018 through a United Nations General Assembly Resolution.
- Theme - The United Nations has designated the theme for this year as 'Parliaments for the Planet.' The theme emphasises that climate action starts at home, urging parliaments and parliamentarians to:
 - Promote the reduction of carbon footprints.
 - Adopt greener policies.
 - Embrace a sustainable future.
- By taking decisive action on climate change, parliaments and parliamentarians can contribute to controlling the climate crisis.

World Asteroid Day

- World Asteroid Day is an annual global event which is held on June 30, the anniversary of the Tunguska event in 1908 when a meteor air burst decimated about 2,000 square km (500,000 acres) of pine forest in central Siberia, Russia. The Tunguska asteroid event was the Earth's largest asteroid impact in recorded history.
- History - The Asteroid Day was cofounded in 2014 (the year after the 2013 Chelyabinsk meteor air burst) by renowned cosmologist Stephen Hawking, Apollo 9 astronaut Rusty Schweickart, astrophysicist Brian May and some others. On 15 February 2013, an extraordinarily large fireball, travelling at a speed of 18.6 kms per second, entered the atmosphere and disintegrated in the skies over Chelyabinsk, Russia. According to NASA, the diameter of the asteroid was estimated at 18 meters and its mass at 11,000 tons. The total impact energy of the Chelyabinsk Fireball was 440 kilotons.
- Significance - This day serves as a reminder of the devastating impact asteroids can have on Earth and highlights the incident of the 1908 Tunguska event and the Chelyabinsk event of 2013 in recorded history. The catastrophic impact of an asteroid on earth can be understood from the fact that around 65 million years ago a chain reaction started by an asteroid impact led to the extinction of the dinosaurs.

and affected all life on Earth. It is also an ideal day to think of measures to save the planet from the hazardous effects of asteroids

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

MoU signed between Ministry of Culture and Canara Bank for disbursement of financial assistance to veteran artists

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Ministry of Culture and Canara Bank on 28.06.2023 for disbursement of financial assistance to veteran artists under the "Scheme for Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists".
- Ministry of Culture administers a Scheme namely "Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists" under which financial assistance of Rs. 6000/- per month is provided to artists and scholars above the age of 60 years who have contributed significantly in their specialized fields of performing arts and culture in their active age or are still contributing, but due to old age they are facing difficulty and are in penury condition. Currently, under the scheme, disbursement of financial assistance in respect of artists selected before 2017 is made through LIC while for the artists approved post 2017, it is made directly by the Ministry. It has been noted that the receipt of documents from the beneficiaries often get delayed resulting in disbursement of amount as lump sum instead of being released on a regular basis. With the signing of the MoU with Canara Bank, in a period of approximately two months post streamlining of the process, disbursement of financial assistance to the veteran artists would commence on monthly basis, also ensuring redressal of long pending grievances of beneficiaries.

2nd meeting of India-Tanzania Joint Defence Cooperation Committee held in Arusha

- The second edition of Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) meeting between India and Tanzania was held in Arusha on June 28 & 29, 2023. The Indian delegation, led by Joint Secretary Shri Amitabh Prasad, included senior officials from Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces. The High Commissioner of India to Tanzania Shri Binay S Pradhan also attended the meeting.
- During the meeting, the two sides discussed a wide range of opportunities for collaboration with a view to enhancing security in the Indian Ocean Region. The Indian delegation highlighted the growing prowess of the Indian Defence manufacturing to export to friendly countries. A five-year roadmap for defence cooperation was also agreed to between the two sides, which covers initiatives ranging from customised training & capacity building to maritime cooperation, infrastructure building and collaboration in defence equipment and technology.
- Representatives from Defence PSUs also accompanied the Indian delegation. They held extensive meetings with the stakeholders from the Tanzanian Forces on the sidelines of the JDCC meeting.

RANKING

India ranks 67th on WEF's Energy Transition Index, Sweden tops

- With significant improvement in key parameters of energy equity & security, and environmental sustainability, India jumped 20 places to the 67th position among 120

countries in the 'Energy Transition Index' (ETI), according to a report released by the World Economic Forum Wednesday. ETI benchmarks the countries on the performance of their energy systems, and also their readiness to secure sustainable energy systems.

- India's energy transition has garnered international recognition for its accelerated progress across all dimensions. The report emphasizes India's commitment to building a secure and sustainable energy future despite continued economic growth. One of India's notable achievements is the achievement of universal access to electricity. By replacing solid fuels with cleaner cooking options, India has improved the quality of life for its citizens while reducing the environmental impact of energy consumption.
- Reduction in Energy Intensity and Carbon Intensity - India's energy transition journey highlights significant strides in reducing energy intensity and carbon intensity. Through the implementation of energy-efficient measures and the adoption of cleaner technologies, India has successfully decoupled its economic growth from energy consumption and reduced its carbon footprint.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

ICICI Lombard and ICICI Prudential Life Insurance jointly launch 'iShield'

- CICI Lombard General Insurance and ICICI Prudential Life Insurance have jointly launched an insurance solution, "iShield", which will provide customers with both, health and life insurance. The plan will enable customers to take care of expenses required for medical treatments. Besides, it will also provide a lump sum amount to the family in case of the unfortunate demise of the policyholder.
- iShield, with its two-in-one benefit, will provide customers with the convenience of managing their health and life insurance needs through a single proposition instead of purchasing separate products for each of them. Customers can easily purchase this solution by filling in a single application and undergoing a medical check-up. Besides the vast agent network, multiple easy-to-use touchpoints such as the company website or the mobile app will provide customers with a hassle-free purchase and premium payment experience.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

World Bank approves \$700 million for crisis-hit Sri Lanka

- The World Bank has approved a substantial funding package of 700 million dollars for Sri Lanka, providing a significant boost to the country's financial situation. Out of the approved funds, approximately 500 million dollars will be allocated for budgetary support, aimed at stabilizing the country's economy. The remaining 200 million dollars will be dedicated to welfare support, with the objective of assisting those most affected by the ongoing crisis.
- Sri Lanka's financial crisis - Sri Lanka has been facing its most severe financial crisis since gaining independence from Britain in 1948. The country experienced record lows in Foreign Exchange reserves last year, prompting India to provide humanitarian assistance totaling approximately 4 billion dollars through grants and lines of credit.

- The World Bank's assistance represents the largest amount of financial support received by the crisis-stricken nation since the approval of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreement in March. The IMF agreement provided Sri Lanka with an extended fund facility of close to 3 billion dollars, which will be available over a 48-month period.

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INTERNATIONAL

WHO and ICH collaborate to enhance global sharing of regulatory information on medical products

- The World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH) collaborate to enhance the registry and sharing of regulatory information on medical products worldwide.
- The collaboration will help establish a unified language that streamlines global regulatory decision-making involving the safety and efficacy of medical products while offering insights into the scope, causes and consequences of diseases and mortality worldwide, as per WHO.
- Dr Robert Jakob, WHO Team Lead, Classifications and Terminologies Unit, said, the collaboration paves the way for enhancing medical treatment and patient safety. Also, it aids in the overall improvement of health policies.
- MedDRA, the Medical Dictionary for Regulatory Activities, is a highly specific standardised medical terminology developed by ICH to facilitate sharing of regulatory information internationally for medical products used by humans. It is used for registration, documentation and safety monitoring of medical products before and after a product has been authorised.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Indian-origin satellite expert Aarti Holla-Maini appointed as UN Outer Space Affairs director

- Indian-origin satellite industry expert Aarti Holla-Maini has been appointed as the Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) in Vienna by the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Aarti Holla-Maini will succeed Simonetta Di Pippo of Italy.
- The primary objective of UNOOSA is to foster global collaboration in the peaceful utilization and exploration of outer space, as well as the effective application of space science and technology to achieve sustainable economic and social progress.
- Aarti Holla-Maini has over 25 years of professional experience in the space sector including managerial and advocacy functions.
- Before she was appointed as the Director of United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, she was Executive Vice-President Sustainability, Policy & Impact at NorthStar Earth & Space.

Federal Bank gets RBI approval on appointment of A P Hota as part time Chairman

- The Federal Bank announced that the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has given approval for the appointment of AP Hota as part time chairman of the private sector bank. "We wish to inform that RBI had vide its letter dated June 26, 2023 accorded its approval for the appointment of A P Hota, independent director, as part time chairman of the Bank with effect from June 29, 2023, till January 14, 2026," it said in a regulatory filing.
- AP Hota has banking experience of over 27 years in Reserve Bank, mostly in technology and payment systems, from 1982- 2009. While at Reserve Bank of India, he served as nominee director to the Board of Vijaya Bank and subsequently Andhra Bank. "He was the architect of NPCI and served as its Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer between 2009- 2017," the company said in the filing.

Rohit Jawa took over as MD and CEO of HUL as Sanjiv Mehta retires

- Rohit Jawa is all set to take over the corner office at Hindustan Unilever tomorrow 30 June - a day after Sanjiv Mehta retires as managing director and chief executive officer.
- Known for transforming the consumer goods major's China and Philippine business, Jawa serves as the chief of transformation in his London-based role. The 56-year-old Unilever veteran's career has spanned over 35 years since he joined as a management trainee in 1988.
- In his new role as the MD and CEO of Hindustan Unilever, Jawa is likely to get an annual remuneration of Rs 21.43 crore, according to the company's annual report. He will also receive a sum of Rs 4.83 crore as mobility-linked allowances in FY24.
- According to the annual report, Mehta's salary was 164 times higher than that of an average HUL employee. Now, Jawa's pay package will exceed what Mehta had received in FY23. He took home Rs 22.36 crore in annual remuneration last fiscal.

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Statistics Day

- National Statistics Day is celebrated on June 29 every year to recognize the contributions of PC Mahalanobis. It is not to be confused with World Statistics Day, which is a UN-designated day and is celebrated on October 20 every 5 years.
- History - Indian government designated 29th June as National Statistics Day in recognition of the contributions made by Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis in the fields of statistics and economic planning on June 5, 2007. The first National Statistics Day was celebrated on June 29, 2007 and it has been celebrated on the same day since then.
- Theme - The theme of this year's Statistics Day is Alignment of State Indicator Framework with National Indicator Framework for Monitoring Sustainable Development Goals.
- The significance of Statistics Day is to create public awareness in the young generation about the role and importance of statistics in strategizing, economic planning and policy formulation. The occasion is celebrated as a reminder to learn from the achievements of Professor Mahalanobis in the field of statistics.

International Day of the Tropics

- Every Year, International Day of the Tropics is observed on June 29. Tropics are the areas encircling the Earth's equator, situated between the Tropic of Cancer in the Northern Hemisphere and the Tropic of Capricorn in the Southern Hemisphere. This day is observed to recognize the remarkable diversity of tropical regions and draw attention to the unique challenges and opportunities they encounter.
- The day serves as a platform to highlight the immense variety found in the tropics, share stories and expertise, evaluate advancements in these regions, and celebrate the diverse cultures and potential within tropical nations. Scroll down to know more about the history and significance of this day:
- History - James Cook University of Australia, alongside 11 other research institutions, released an inaugural State of the Tropics Report on June 29, 2014. The report specifically mentioned that the population present in the Tropical region is expected to rise from 40 percent to 50 percent by the year 2050. It looked into various environmental, social, and economic factors to acknowledge the quality of life in tropical regions.
- Considering the significance of the report, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/70/267 in 2016, designating June 29 as an official annual observance of International Day of the Tropics, celebrating the anniversary of the report's release.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Fame and TM and SIDBI signed MoU, at attract investment worth Rs,1510 cr

- On International MSME Day (June 27), several memoranda of understanding (MoU) are set to be signed to attract investments to the tune of over ₹1,723 crore in the presence of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister.
- In an event scheduled in Chennai on Tuesday morning, an MoU between FaMe TN (Facilitating MSMEs of Tamil Nadu) and the SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) for investments of ₹1,510 crore is likely to be signed, an official release said. It is likely to create over 7,400 jobs.
- The Chief Minister would also inaugurate three new industrial estates at Kodur in Chengalpattu district, Manapparai in Tiruchi district and Sakkimangalam in Madurai district. He would also inaugurate the cashew processing cluster at Kadampuliyur in Cuddalore district under the MSME cluster development scheme.
- Stalin would also hand over awards to entrepreneurs in the MSME sector. Subsidies to the tune of over ₹18.94 crore to 100 beneficiaries under the Annal Ambedkar Business Champions Scheme would be given.

Assam signs MoU with Caspian Impact Investment to boost rural infrastructure and agribusiness

- The Government of Assam, through the Assam Rural Infrastructure and Agricultural Services (ARIAS) Society, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Caspian Impact Investment Adviser (Caspian Equity) to establish an investment fund aimed at enhancing agricultural growth and employment opportunities in the state.

- The collaboration between the government body and the venture capital institution marks a significant step towards strengthening rural infrastructure and fostering agricultural productivity.
- The partnership entails the establishment and implementation of the Assam Agribusiness Investment Fund (AAIF), a contributory and determinate investment trust. ARIAS will act as the nodal agency for the fund, while Caspian Equity will serve as the fund manager.
- The AAIF, with an initial corpus of INR 250 crore, will primarily focus on investing in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) within the agribusiness and allied sectors, aiming to achieve accelerated growth.
- The World Bank, through the Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART), will provide anchor funding for the AAIF. As a Category II Alternative Investment Fund registered with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), the AAIF represents a unique sector-specific fund initiated by a state government in India, with the objective of boosting agricultural productivity and generating employment opportunities.

L&T Tech partners with Mavenir for 5G automation services

- IT company L&T Technology Services on Monday said it has partnered with state-owned Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) for the deployment of private 5G network for enterprise customers.
- According to the agreement framework signed by both companies, the spectrum will be provided by BSNL using both PLMN (public land mobile network) and isolated allotment.
- L&T Technology Services (LTTS) will anchor the private network requirements by deploying equipment, applications, servers, technology and software, and core for the integration of devices and sensors within the customer's ecosystem, the IT firm said in a statement.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

RBI imposes 30 Lakh penalty on Standard Chartered Bank and others

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed penalties on Standard Chartered Bank, four credit bureaus, and seven cooperative banks for various violations. Standard Chartered Bank was fined ₹30 lakh for non-compliance with KYC directions. The credit bureaus, including Experian, TransUnion CIBIL, Equifax, and CRIF High Mark, faced penalties totaling ₹1 crore for inadequate maintenance of accurate credit information. Additionally, the RBI penalized seven cooperative banks, including UP Co-operative Bank, for violating certain provisions.
- Deficiencies in Regulatory Compliance The penalty is based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and does not question the validity of any transactions or agreements between the bank and its customers.

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NATIONAL

CCI approves acquisition of TCNS Clothing by Aditya Birla Fashion

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) on Tuesday approved the acquisition of TCNS Clothing Co Limited by Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Limited, The proposed combination involves the acquisition of 51 per cent of the “expanded share capital”.
- The acquirer Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Limited is a listed company and is part of the Aditya Birla conglomerate. It is engaged in retailing of branded products within the apparel, footwear and accessories segment, through its retail stores, online retail platforms and e-commerce marketplaces.
- The target company TCNS Clothing Co. Limited is a listed firm engaged in the business of manufacturing, distribution and sale of women’s apparel, jewellery, footwear, and beauty products, currently undertaken under the brands — W, Aurelia, Wishful, Elleven and Folk Song.

CJI Dr. Justice D Y Chandrachud to lay foundation stone of new complex of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court in Raika

- The Chief Justice of India Dr Justice D Y Chandrachud will lay foundation stone of new complex of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh High Court in Raika area in the outskirts of Jammu city, The complex equipped with modern facilities is estimated to cost over 800 crore rupees and will be completed in shortest possible time.
- Union Law Minister, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Supreme Court Judges Sanjay Kishan Koul and Pankaj Mithal, Lieutenant Governor of UT of J&K, Manoj Sinha and Lieutenant Governor of UT of Ladakh B D Mishra and all the Judges of J&K and Ladakh High Court will attend the ceremony. Our Jammu Correspondent reports, the new campus has been conceptualized as a self-contained integrated complex with all multi-disciplinary facilities for an effective judicial eco-system. The new High Court complex will have 35 courtrooms and will also have chambers for 1000 lawyers with space for expansion in future.

Yogi Adityanath launched "Operation Conviction" in Uttar Pradesh

- The Uttar Pradesh Police has recently initiated a comprehensive program named ‘Operation Conviction’ to combat criminals and organized crime in the state. This strategic initiative aims to expedite the conviction process, particularly in cases related to heinous crimes such as rape, murder, cow slaughter, religious conversion, and those registered under the POCSO Act. By ensuring immediate arrests, robust evidence collection, meticulous investigations and effective representation in courts, the authorities seek to minimize the time taken for criminals to face justice.
- A web portal is currently under development to facilitate the weekly review of identified cases. This portal will enable senior police officials at the Directorate General of Police (DGP) office in the state capital to closely monitor the progress of these cases. The portal’s real-time updates and comprehensive data will help

identify any bottlenecks and enable prompt actions to maintain the momentum of the conviction process.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Narayan Rane launches 'CHAMPIONS 2.0 Portal', 'Mobile App

- Shri Narayan Rane launches 'CHAMPIONS 2.0 Portal', 'Mobile App for Geo-tagging of Cluster Projects, Technology Centers' and 'MSME Idea Hackathon 3.0' for women entrepreneurs
- On the occasion of International MSME Day, The Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, MSME celebrated 'Udyami Bharat-MSME Day'. The Union Minister for Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Shri Narayan Rane graced the occasion as Chief Guest of the programme along with the Union Minister of State for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma as Guest of Honor.
- The event showcased the launch of various initiatives of the Ministry of MSME, dedicated towards growth and development of MSMEs such as 'CHAMPIONS 2.0 Portal' and 'Mobile App for Geo-tagging of Cluster Projects and Technology Centers' by the Chief Guest and Guest of Honor. Further, results for 'MSME Idea Hackathon 2.0' were declared and 'MSME Idea Hackathon 3.0' for women entrepreneurs was launched.

OBITUARY

Goodenough, Nobel laureate who gave the world Li-ion batteries, passes away

- Renowned American scientist John Bannister Goodenough, the co-inventor of Lithium-ion batteries and a co-winner of the 2019 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, has sadly passed away. Goodenough was just a month shy of his 101st birthday. His British-American counterpart, Stan Whittingham, shared the Nobel prize with Goodenough for their groundbreaking work. Whittingham initially discovered that lithium could be stored in titanium sulphide sheets, and Goodenough perfected the concept by incorporating a cobalt-based cathode, resulting in a product that has become an integral part of people's lives today.
- In addition to his groundbreaking work on Lithium-ion batteries, John Goodenough played a significant role in the development of Random Access Memory (RAM) for computers. His contributions to the field of computer technology further solidified his legacy as a pioneering scientist.
- Autobiography and the Intersection of Science and Spirituality - In 2008, John Goodenough penned his autobiography, titled "Witness to Grace," which delved into his personal history. The book offered insights into his scientific pursuits as well as his spiritual beliefs. Goodenough explored the intersection between science and spirituality, providing readers with a glimpse into his unique perspective.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

DBS Bank India appoints Rajat Verma as head of institutional banking

- DBS Bank India on Monday said it has appointed Rajat Verma as managing director and head of institutional banking in India.

- The current head of institutional banking Niraj Mittal has recently moved to a new role as country head of DBS Bank in Australia. The bank said Mittal will focus on growing the DBS franchise there, including improving linkages with South-East Asia and South Asia.
- Verma was, till recently, with HSBC India where he was managing director and country head of commercial banking in India. The statement said Verma brings a wealth of knowledge and deep industry expertise to DBS. He holds an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow, and a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering from the Delhi College of Engineering.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

International Conference on Green Hydrogen to be held in New Delhi from July 5 – 7, 2023

- The Government of India is organizing an International Conference on Green Hydrogen (ICGH-2023) during 5th – 7th July 2023 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, to bring together the global scientific and industrial community to discuss recent advances and emerging technologies in the entire green hydrogen value chain. The conference will enable the sector stakeholders to explore the evolving green hydrogen landscape and innovation-driven solutions in the sector.
- The conference is being 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.
- Aim - The fundamental aim of the Conference is to explore how we can establish a Green Hydrogen ecosystem and foster a systemic approach for meeting the global goals for decarbonization through Green Hydrogen. Apart from domain-specific research interactions on hydrogen production, storage, distribution and downstream applications, the conference will also discuss green financing, human resource upskilling and startup initiatives in this area. The conference will enable to share and learn from international best practices in the sector.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Priya A.S. gets Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award for children's literature

- Priya A S, a talented writer, has been honored with the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar 2023 in the Malayalam language for her novel "Perumazhayathe Kunjithalukal" (The Children Who Never Withered). This recognition adds to her previous achievement of winning the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for Children's Literature in 2020 for the same novel.
- About: Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar - The Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar, awarded by the Sahitya Akademi, carries a cash prize of Rs 50,000 and an engraved copper plaque. The winners in each language are selected by panels of three members. Dr. Paul Manalil, B S Rajeev, and Mundoor Sethumadhavan served as the jury members for Malayalam. Priya's novel emerged as the winner among the ten recommended books considered for the award.
- Priya A S's literary prowess has earned her previous accolades as well. In 2014, she was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Translation Prize for her Malayalam translation of

Arundhati Roy's Booker Prize-winning novel, "The God of Small Things." This recognition further highlighted her talent and contribution to the literary world.

RANKING

IIT Bombay ranked 1st in India and 149th in world in QS World University Rankings

- IIT Bombay has been ranked 1st in India and 149th in world in QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) World University Rankings. It has moved significantly up from 172nd rank last year to 149th rank this year. For the first time ever, IITB has been ranked within top 150 and top 10% in QS rankings.
- IITB has a score of 81.9 in employer reputation, 73.1 in citation per faculty, 55.5 in academic reputation, 47.4 in employment outcome, 54.9 in sustainability. Among the various 9 parameters employer reputation indicated the strongest one for IIT Bombay with a rank of 69 globally. Director of IIT Bombay Prof. Subhasis Chaudhuri said, excellence in teaching is the key driving point for IIT Bombay. He said, efforts lie in providing an ambience and infrastructure that is conducive to achieving excellence by students and faculties.

BOOKS & AUTHOR

Rupa Pai wrote a new book called - The Yoga Sutras for Children

- A new book titled "The Yoga Sutras for Children" by Indian author Roopa Pai was published by Hachette India on 27 June. Roopa Pai's book, "The Gita for Children" was an award-winning bestseller. Now the book "Yoga Sutras for Children" focuses on uncovering the secrets of Patanjali's 2,000-year-old treatise on yoga.
- The book shares Maharishi Patanjali's techniques to "nurture energies and attitudes, enabling them to do small and big things in a focused and balanced way". Featuring black-and-white artwork by illustrator Sayan Mukherjee, the book helps young readers to approach their increasingly complex lives with positivity and confidence. According to the publishers, Pai, in this "surprising" and "sparkling" book, unravels the secrets of Patanjali's compact 2,000-year-old text in ways both fun and accessible.

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NATIONAL

IAF carries out Exercise Ranvijay with focus on integrated operations

- The Indian Air Force carried out Exercise 'Ranvijay' with a focus on integration on Sunday (June 25). It was conducted from different air bases of the command headquarters of IAF in Prayagraj. The IAF conducted day and night operations with its various combat fleet including the Sukhoi Su-30MKI aircraft, a twin-engine multirole fighter aircraft developed by Russia's Sukhoi and built under license by India's Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).
- About ; Exercise 'Ranvijay' - The Indian Air Force conducted Exercise Ranvijay with a focus on integration and joint operations. The aircraft showed the capability of the Sukhoi and IAF to conduct night operations. It also displayed great coordination

between man and machine as well as the IAF's capability to carry out operations under any circumstances.

- The exercise has proven that the IAF is capable of taking on challenges and protecting the nation's skies from India's adversaries with its technological capabilities. Moreover, the integration of the three tri-services will help thwart threats from India's adversaries along the Western and Northern Border.

1000-year-old pillars with Jain sculptures found near Hyderabad

- Two 1000-year-old square pillars with sculptures of Jain Tirthankaras (a saviour and spiritual teacher of the dharma), were found on the outskirts of the city in Rangareddy district's Moinabad village.
- The information about the pillars was first shared by P Srinath Reddy, a young archaeologist and heritage activist, following which a senior archaeologist E Sivanagireddy inspected the spot, He said the two pillars, including one granite and another black basalt, were carved with four Jain Tirthankaras namely, Adinatha, Neminatha, Parshvanatha and Vardhamana Mahavira.
- The pillars bore inscriptions in Telugu-Kannada language, where the visible part of the inscription refers to a Jain Basadi (monastery) located close to Chilkur village. Sivanagireddy opined that the pillars might have been brought from a local dilapidated Jain temple and fitted to the sluice some 100 years ago.

Adani Group founder Gautam Adani launches "Jeetenge Hum" campaign

1. The Adani Group celebrated its Foundation Day, honoring the Indian cricket team that won the 1983 World Cup. The event, dubbed "Adani Day," took place on the 61st birthday of the group's founder, Gautam Adani. The Adani Group launched the "Jeetenge Hum" campaign during the event, with the goal of rallying support for Team India and boosting morale ahead of the upcoming ICC ODI Cricket World Cup 2023.
2. **About: Jeetenge Hum" campaign** - The launch of the campaign commemorates the 40th anniversary of India's historic victory in 1983. While launching the campaign, Gautam Adani emphasised the importance of cricket as a unifying force in the country. The campaign encourages Indian cricket fans to unite as one, and rally behind Team India with #JeetengeHum on Twitter and Instagram, backing the team's quest for victory and boosting their morale.
3. This campaign draws inspiration from the Adani Group's ethos, "Kar ke dikhaya hai, Kar ke dikhayenge," symbolizing an indomitable spirit of achievement in both cricket and business. The "Jeetenge Hum" campaign champions the belief that winners, having tasted victory before, will inevitably relish it again—an inner conviction that precedes their satisfaction and pride in the public eye.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Union Minister Shri Parshottam Rupala launched NANDI Portal

- Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala launched NANDI - NOC Approval for New Drug and Inoculation System portal at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi. With this portal, DAHD will facilitate the regulatory

approval process with transparency to assess and examine veterinary product proposals will be more streamlined through seamless integration with the SUGAM portal of Central Drugs Standard Control Organization.

- Shri Rupala expressed appreciation for the outstanding work of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying (DAHD) and highlighted the initiative as a significant step towards advancing Digital India and promoting the well-being of livestock and the livestock industry. The launch of the NANDI portal is another notable undertaking following the animal vaccination coverage initiative and Mobile Veterinary Units (MVUs).
- This initiative would also provide valuable support to researchers and industries from a commercial perspective. By raising awareness among livestock rearers and improving logistical facilities, there would be an increase in the consumption of drugs. Union Minister stressed the importance of closely monitoring the portal's activities for a few months to establish a robust system. Shri Rupala expressed appreciation for the contributions of all stakeholders, including CDAC, in the development of the NANDI portal.

OBITURY

BJP Rajya Sabha MP Hardwar Dubey Passes Away

- The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) senior leader and Rajya Sabha member from Uttar Pradesh Hardwar Dubey breathed his last on Monday morning in New Delhi. He was a sitting MP elected to the Rajya Sabha in November 2020.
- The late Dubey, 74, was also elected as a member of Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly from Agra Cantonment assembly segment in 1990s and served as a minister in the Kalyan Singh ministry in 1991. The late Dubey, who was closely associated with the Sangh parivaar and its affiliate Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) was made state spokesperson and vice-president of the BJP in 2011 and 2013 respectively, before being elevated as a Rajya Sabha member.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the demise of the BJP MP and described him a hardworking leader. "Deeply saddened by the demise of hardworking BJP MP Hardwar Dubey ji. He was such a grassroots leader, who will always be remembered for his important contribution in the development journey of Uttar Pradesh. May God give strength to his family and supporters in this hour of grief. om Shanti,"

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Conservative leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis wins second term as Greek's PM

- Greece's conservative New Democracy party chief Kyriakos Mitsotakis secured a clear parliamentary majority, winning a second four-year term as Prime Minister of Greece on Sunday, CNN reported. The 55-year-old leader emerged victorious with more power as his party achieved a resounding victory in the elections.
- Mitsotakis, in his victory speech, said that "We have high targets that will transform Greece...Today we will celebrate our victory, tomorrow we will roll up our sleeves," according to CNN.

- Mitsotakis' New Democracy party received over 40 percent of the vote, securing at least 158 seats in the 300-seat parliament with around 96 percent of the votes counted. The main leftist opposition party, Syriza, was far behind in the early results, receiving over 17 percent of the vote.

Mastercard's Michael Miebach joins USISPF Board of Directors

1. Mastercard CEO Michael Miebach has joined the board of directors of the US-India Strategic and Partnership Forum (USISPF). Observing that USISPF is a critical forum for business and government leaders to come together and drive the next phase of growth in the US-India partnership, Miebach said he believes the relationship between the two countries will define the future of the global economy and shape their ability to tackle the most pressing global challenges together.
2. This strategic alliance aims to foster collaborations in various sectors and promote the growth and development of both economies.
3. By joining forces, both countries aim to drive innovation, promote digital transformation, and address global challenges. With Mastercard's exemplary work in advancing the global digital economy and its alignment with India's digital vision, this strategic partnership holds great promise for shaping the future of both nations.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World MSME Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Day

- The United Nations designated June 27 as Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Day. When in 2017, the United Nations designated June 27 as Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) Day, was not only an acknowledgement to the significant contribution made by MSMEs to the global economy but was also an to honour their role in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They promote innovation, creativity and decent work for all.
- History - The United Nations General Assembly on 6 April 2017 designated 27 June as "Micro-, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises Day" (A/RES/71/279) to raise awareness of the tremendous contributions of MSMEs to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- Theme - The theme MSME Day 2023 in India is "Future-ready MSMEs for India@100." The Global Council for the Promotion of International Trade is also celebrating the day with "Building a Stronger Future Together" theme of this year. The global body is also launching #Brand10000MSMEs Network, a dynamic platform where MSMEs from around the world can connect, learn, and grow together.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare signed a MOU with Pixxel Space India Pvt. Limited

- Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare signed a MOU with Pixxel Space India Pvt. Limited in the presence of the Shri Manoj Ahuja, Secretary, DA&FW, Pramod Kumar Meherda, Additional Secretary, DA&FW and other senior officers of the Ministry at New Delhi.

- Shri C. S. Murthy, Director, MNCFC signed the MOU on behalf of Government of India, where as Shri Abhishek Krishnan, Chief of Staff represented M/s Pixxel Space India Pvt. Limited. It aims to develop various geospatial solutions on pro bono basis for the Indian Agriculture Ecosystem using Pixxel's hyperspectral dataset.
- The project focuses on leveraging sample hyper-spectral data from Pixxel's path finder satellites to develop analytics models focused on crop mapping, crop stage discrimination, crop health monitoring, and soil organic carbon assessments. This will enable the Government to develop use cases with hyperspectral data provided by PIXXEL. MNCFC on behalf of the DA&FW will associate with Pixel team for developing and implementing the suitable methodologies.

RANKING

India ranked 40th spot in 2023. Global Competitiveness Index, Denmark shines again

- India has dropped three spots to the 40th position on the latest Global Competitiveness Index released by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), a Moneycontrol report said. While this represents a decline from last year, it is an improvement from the 43rd rank secured in 2019-2021.
- The IMD's World Competitiveness Centre (WCC) report highlighted India's progress in government efficiency but pointed out lagging performance in business efficiency, infrastructure, and economic performance. Key factors contributing to India's score were exchange rate stability, compensation levels, and advancements in pollution control.
- The report cited by Moneycontrol also identified several challenges India is expected to face in 2023. These include sustaining high GDP growth, managing financial market volatility, controlling inflation and fiscal deficit, accelerating digital transformation, and mobilizing resources for infrastructure development.

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NATIONAL

India's first hydrogen-powered train to run from Haryana's Jind district

- Shobhan Choudhary, General Manager (GM) of Northern Railway, recently visited the country's first hydrogen plant, which is set up in Jind, Haryana. This will be the first hydrogen-powered train in the country and is expected to run from Haryana's Jind district by the end of this year.
- The officials claimed that hydrogen-powered trains are running only in Germany, and the whole world is watching the project to see how India will start such trains.
- India's first hydrogen plant is being set up near the railway junction in Jind district. Officials said that the development of the plant has reached the final stage and that hydrogen will be produced from water. The first prototype of the hydrogen train is expected to be introduced in the financial year 2023-2024 between Jind and Sonapat on the Northern Railway. The hydrogen fuel-based train of eight bogies will be environmentally friendly.

Assam's first underwater tunnel to be constructed between Numaligarh and Gohpur

- The first underwater tunnel in Assam will be constructed between Numaligarh and Gohpur at an estimated cost of Rs 6,000 crore, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that the tender for the preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) will open in the next month.
- The idea of an underwater tunnel arose from the many bridges built over the Brahmaputra River to facilitate the movement of both vehicles and railways. Discussions were held to determine the location and it was decided that the tunnel would be built between Numaligarh and Gohpur.
- The tender for the DPR will open on July 4 and Sarma expressed hope that work on the tunnel could begin during his tenure as chief minister. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the project, and once the tunnel is completed, it will bring the two banks, north and south, of the Brahmaputra river closer together.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Drug Day or International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

- The World Drug Day or International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking is observed on June 26 every year to strengthen action and cooperation in achieving a world free of drug abuse.
- The aim of this year's World Drug Day campaign is to raise awareness about the importance of treating people who use drugs with respect and empathy; providing evidence-based, voluntary services for all; offering alternatives to punishment; prioritizing prevention; and leading with compassion, said the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- History - At the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held in Vienna on June 26, 1987, it was recommended that a day be observed annually to commemorate the struggle against drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The United Nations General Assembly on December 7, 1987, decided to observe June 26 as International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.
- Theme - This year World Drug Day's theme is "People first: Stop stigma and discrimination, strengthen prevention". The world drug problem is a complex issue that affects millions of people worldwide. Many people who use drugs face stigma and discrimination, which can further harm their physical and mental health and prevent them from accessing the help they need.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Third Infrastructure Working Group Meeting under India's G20 Presidency to take place in Rishikesh from June 26-28

- The three-day meeting of the Infrastructure Working Group under the G20 Summit in Uttarakhand will begin at Narendranagar -Rishikesh today – 26 June.
- A total of 63 delegates from G20 member states, invitees and international organizations have arrived in Narendranagar to participate in the meeting.
- During the three-day event, various official meetings and cultural programs have been planned for the delegates.

- Apart from formal discussions, the delegates will experience the rich culture and beautiful landscapes of Rishikesh. The Presidency has also arranged an excursion for the delegates on the afternoon of 28 June and has planned a “Yoga Retreat” on 26 June.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

PM Modi becomes first Indian to receive the highest civilian award of Egypt

- The President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, H.E. Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, conferred Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the ‘Order of the Nile’, the highest civilian award of Egypt. PM Modi is the first Indian to have received this honour in Egypt.
- PM Modi also visited Al-Hakim Mosque in Cairo during his State Visit to Egypt. PM Modi also met the leaders of Bohra community, who are actively involved in the upkeep of this Fatimid era Shi’a Mosque and highlighted the strong people to people ties between India and Egypt.
- Both leaders discussed ways to further deepen the partnership between the two countries, particularly in areas like trade and investment, information technology, defence and security,

Shankar Mahadevan receives honorary doctorate in UK

- Singer-composer Shankar Mahadevan received an honorary doctorate from Birmingham City University (BCU) in England, Shankar Mahadevan's honorary doctorate is in recognition of his significant contribution to the field of music and the arts.
- Shankar Mahadevan is 56 years old and a prominent member of the music composition trio Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy. He was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Professor Philip Plowden, Vice-Chancellor of Birmingham City University.
- About: United Kingdom: - It is an island nation located in northwestern Europe. It consists of four countries: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Capital city of UK is London, Current Prime Minister - Rishi Sunak and Emperor - Charles III

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance Launches Nishchit Pension Plan

- Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance Company Limited (ABSLI), a subsidiary of Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL), has recently launched a new retirement solution called ABSLI Nishchit Pension Plan. This plan is specifically designed to help individuals plan for their retirement by providing a 100% guaranteed corpus, ensuring a secure and uninterrupted income during their golden years.
- The ABSLI Nishchit Pension Plan offers several key features. Firstly, it allows policyholders to accumulate a guaranteed corpus by providing accrued guaranteed additions throughout the policy term. Additionally, a loyalty addition is provided at the end of the policy term, as long as the policy remains active and all premiums have been paid. These features ensure that policyholders can accumulate a fully guaranteed corpus by their desired retirement age, guaranteeing a steady income after retirement.

- Another notable aspect of the plan is its flexibility, as it allows policyholders to defer the Vesting Benefit for up to 10 years. This flexibility ensures that individuals can align their retirement planning with their specific life goals.

Infosys signs \$454 million deal with Danske Bank for digital transformation

- Infosys has announced a long-term collaboration with Danske Bank to drive the bank's digital transformation ambitions with speed and scale. The projected agreement worth is \$454 million for a 5-year term with the possibility to renew for an extra year up to three times.
- This agreement, according to the company's exchange filing, shall help Danske Bank accomplish its strategic priorities of enhanced client experiences, operational excellence, and a modernised technological environment powered by next-generation technologies. As part of this agreement, Infosys will also buy Danske Bank's IT centre in India, which employs over 1,400 people.

Manipal Technologies partners with Indian Bank to offer customized banking solution

- Manipal Technologies Limited has stated that it has partnered with state-owned Indian Bank to drive financial inclusion by offering customised banking products.
- The partnership aims to build a sustainable network of corporate business correspondents (CBCs) that will enhance the availability, affordability, and accessibility of financial services, particularly in underserved markets and rural areas, it said in a release.
- As part of this association, Manipal Technologies Limited (MTL) will work closely with Indian Bank to offer tailor-made banking products in rural locations. The initial focus will be serving more than 600 locations and gradually expanding the presence in newer regions in states such as Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Haryana, and Punjab,

REC to provide ₹3,045 cr finance to Bangalore Metro

- REC Limited, a Public Sector Enterprise under the Union Ministry of Power, has announced its decision to provide financial assistance of Rs 3,045 crore to Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) for the Phase-II project of Bangalore Metro.
- The assistance was approved by the REC Board during a meeting. The Ministry of Power released a statement confirming the extension of financial support to BMRCL.
- About: Phase-II project of Namma Metro - The Phase-II project of Namma Metro includes the extension of the existing East-West Corridor and North-South Corridor of Phase-I, as well as the addition of two new lines: RV Road to Bommasandra and Kalena Agrahara to Nagawara.
- These new metro lines will help alleviate traffic congestion in high-traffic areas of Bangalore. Upon completion of Phase-II, the Namma Metro network will cover a total distance of 114.39 km and have 101 stations.

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INTERNATIONAL

India and UAE signed a Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Authorized Economic Operators

- India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 23 June have signed a Mutual Recognition Arrangement for Authorized Economic Operators, The agreement was formally signed during the World Customs Organization's (WCO) Customs Co-operation Council meeting held in Brussels.
- **Aim** - The Mutual Recognition Arrangement aims to promote trade facilitation and ease of doing business between the two countries, It establishes a framework for recognizing Authorized Economic Operators (AEOs) from both India and the UAE.
- The recognition of AEO status will streamline customs procedures, reduce administrative burdens, and lower costs for authorized businesses.
- This agreement signifies an important milestone in the economic cooperation between India and the UAE and is expected to strengthen bilateral trade ties.
- By leveraging the benefits of the Mutual Recognition Arrangement, both countries aim to enhance trade facilitation, improve the ease of doing business, and encourage investments.

Global Startup Ecosystem Report 2023 Silicon Valley tops the list, Bengaluru – Known as the Silicon valley of India ranked 20th.

- **BENGALURU:** Bengaluru has clinched the 20th spot, moving up two places, in Startup Genome's The Global Startup Ecosystems Report (GSER) 2023.
- While remained on top, New York City and were tied at No.2, With this, the top three ecosystems have all held on to their positions from 2020.
- Among the emerging ecosystems, Pune has moved into the 31-40 range in 2023, from 51-60 in 2022.
- GSER is a comprehensive analysis of startup ecosystems around the world. The report, now in its 11th year, offers a detailed look into the world's top startup ecosystems, while tracking emerging trends and challenges faced by entrepreneurs.

Vienna, the most liveable city' Economic Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index report

- According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's - ETU report on global livability index 2023 Austria's capital city Vienna tops the index. Despite slipping in the rankings during the pandemic in 2021, Vienna bounced back and reclaimed the top spot in 2022, maintaining its position in 2023.
- The city's exceptional combination of stability, well-developed infrastructure, quality education and healthcare services, and rich cultural and entertainment offerings contributed to its continued success.
- Austria, has retained its position as the most liveable city in the world. Denmark's Copenhagen, secured the second spot, while Melbourne and Sydney, Australia,

ranked third and fourth, respectively. While Canada's Vancouver occupied the fifth spot.

SPORTS

Cristiano Ronaldo sets Guinness World Record for 200 international caps

- Cristiano Ronaldo has received a Guinness World Record after reaching 200 international caps for Portugal. The legendary forward is making his 200th appearance for A Selecao das Quinas in their Euro 2024 qualifier against Iceland. The 38-year-old has broken another record and is the most-capped player in international football.
- Cristiano Ronaldo's achievement has been recognized by the Guinness Book of Records. The Portugal captain was presented with a certificate for his accomplishment before his nation's clash against Iceland.
- It is yet another record to add to Ronaldo's long list of accomplishments in international football. The Al Nassr frontman is the all-time top goalscorer in international football with 122 goals in 200 games to date. The legendary forward is showing no signs of stopping and isn't intending on doing so anytime soon. The 38-year-old spoke this week about his future with the Portugal national team.
- **About International Caps** - A cap is awarded to players who make official appearances for their national team in international football, FIFA is the global governing body for world football, Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo holds the current record with 200 international caps. Badr Al-Mutawa of Kuwait previously held the record with 196 international caps.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Covid Booster Vaccine – GEMCOVAC-OM is the first booster COVID-19 vaccine developed in India against the Omicron variant

- Science and Technology Minister Dr Jitendra Singh today launched mRNA-based Covid Booster Vaccine – GEMCOVAC-OM in New Delhi. The vaccine is the first booster COVID-19 vaccine developed in India against the highly transmissible Omicron variant. The vaccine will be rolled out from this Monday and it will cost two thousand 292 rupees per dose. The booster vaccine can be administered to individuals who have received two doses of either Covaxin or Covishield.
- The booster vaccine can be administered to individuals who have received two doses of either Covaxin or Covishield. The vaccine can be stored at 2 to 8 degrees Centigrade. It has demonstrated robust immune responses in phase – 3 clinical trials conducted at 20 centres across 13 cities in India. GEMCOVAC-OM is a needle-free, thermostable vaccine, which does not require ultra-cold chain infrastructure used for other approved mRNA-based vaccines, making it easy for deployment pan India.

Rajasthan govt brings PCTS mobile app to ensure better healthcare for mothers, infants

- Rajasthan Medical & Health Minister Parsadi Lal Meena launched the PCTS mobile app for online tracking, reporting and monitoring of health services being provided to pregnant women, mothers & infants in the state where he also released a poster related to it.

- Through the PCTS mobile app, more than 53 thousand ASHAs of the state will be able to do day-to-day reporting of health services related to women & children of their area on mobile and effective monitoring of this work can also be done.
- The Health Minister said that through this app, ASHA workers of the state will be fully updated with the health services provided to children & women. They will know on which day children and women are to be vaccinated or given the benefit of any other service.
- This will further strengthen the health services for women and children and consequently improve the health indices. Through this app, the officials of the department can get the progress report by talking directly to any ASHA and ANM of the state. Online entry of other services including vaccination of women and children can be done through this.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Day of the Seafarer

- Every year on June 25th, the Day of the Seafarer recognizes the valuable contribution seafarers make to international trade and the world economy.
- The Day of the Seafarer is a special day dedicated to all those who work closely with salt water, including Coast Guards, Navies, fishermen, marine biologists, and cruise ship captains. It commemorates the first recorded sea voyage around 3200 BCE, which was sponsored by the Egyptian Pharaoh Snefru, known for building several pyramids.
- History – The Day of the Seafarer was established through a resolution passed during the 2010 Diplomatic Conference in Manila, where the revised STCW Convention was adopted. This day, observed on June 25th, aims to acknowledge and appreciate the exceptional contribution made by seafarers worldwide to international maritime trade.
- Theme - This year's Day of the Seafarer reflects the 2023 World Maritime theme: "MARPOL at 50 – Our commitment goes on". The 2023 campaign hashtag is #OceansWorthProtecting.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

GE Aerospace signs MoU with HAL, to produce fighter jet engines for Tejas Mk2

- US-based GE Aerospace has signed a memorandum of understanding with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited to produce fighter jet engines for the Indian Air Force. As per the new agreement, Aerospace's F414 engines will be co-produced in India to power the Tejas Light Combat Aircraft Mk2. The development comes amid Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to the US.
- The agreement "includes the potential joint production of GE Aerospace's F414 engines in India". The US company said that it was still working with the government "to receive the necessary export authorization" for the same.
- The announcement will also advance GE Aerospace's earlier commitment to build 99 engines for the Indian Air Force as part of the LCA Mk2 program.

IOB Signed MoU With the Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB), a leading financial institution, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission (TNSRLM) on Tuesday (20.06.2023). The primary objective of this collaboration is to foster the growth of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in the state and provide them with vital financial support.
- The collaboration is expected to catalyze the growth of SHGs targeting Rs.1875 Crores and increase the disbursal under DAY-NRLM (Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihoods Mission) during the current Financial Year, effectively doubling the impact of financial assistance.
- The MoU signing ceremony witnessed the participation of esteemed representatives, including the Managing Director and CEO of Tamilnadu Corporation for Development of Women (TNCDW) and the General Manager of Indian Overseas Bank.
- Under the terms of the MoU, TNSRLM will facilitate eligible SHGs for credit linkage with Indian Overseas Bank. This strategic collaboration aims to streamline access to financial resources for SHGs, enabling them to undertake entrepreneurial activities, expand their ventures, and contribute to the economic development of the state.

8th Global Pharmaceutical Quality Summit 2023 held in Mumbai

- The Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA) on 23 June successfully concluded the 8th edition of the Global Pharmaceutical Quality Summit at Mumbai, The theme for the Summit was, 'Patient Centricity: New Paradigm of Manufacturing and Quality.
- The two-day Summit brought together industry leaders, global regulators, quality experts, and stakeholders to foster knowledge exchange and deliberate on areas of importance in shaping the pharmaceutical landscape in India.
- The event was inaugurated by Samir Mehta, Chairman, Torrent Pharmaceuticals and President, IPA.
- Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers and Health and Family Welfare addressed the summit.
- India played a vital role as the "Pharmacy to the World" during the COVID-19 pandemic by ensuring a steady supply of quality medicines and vaccines across the globe, The Indian pharmaceutical industry has demonstrated its potential both in terms of quality and quantity.
- About the Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA) - IPA was established in the year 1999 in Mumbai, IPA represents 24 research-based national pharmaceutical companies.
- Collectively, the IPA companies contribute to over 85 percent of the private sector investment in pharmaceutical research and development in India, IPA companies are responsible for more than 80 percent of the country's exports of drugs and pharmaceuticals, They also serve over 60 percent of the domestic market in India.