

Weekly Current Affairs PDF March 26 to April 01, 2023

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INTERNATIONAL

IMF approves 15.6 billion dollar support package for Ukraine

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has approved a 15.6 billion US dollar support package for Ukraine to assist with the conflict-hit country's economic recovery. The loan is part of a broader 115 billion US dollar international support package to help the country meet urgent funding needs. Of the total amount approved by the IMF, 2.7 billion dollar is being made available to Ukraine immediately and the rest of the funds are due to be released over the next four years. Extended Fund Facility is the first major financing programme approved by the IMF for a country involved in a large-scale war.

The Russian invasion has devastated Ukraine's economy, causing economic activity to shrink by about 30 percent last year, War has destroyed capital stock and promoted poverty.

The 48-month Extended Fund Facility program approved by the Fund's Board amounts to approximately \$15.6 billion. It is part of the IMF's \$115 billion total support package, which includes debt relief, grants, and loans by multilateral and bilateral institutions.

If the current conflict were to continue into 2025, it would raise Ukraine's financial needs from \$115 billion to around \$140 billion, said the IMF.

Finland Becomes 31st NATO Member After Turkey's Approval

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said Turkey's unanimous vote allowed Finland to become the alliance's 31st member. "I welcome the vote by the Turkish Grand National Assembly to ratify Finland's membership in NATO. All 30 NATO allies have now ratified the accession protocol," he said on Friday.

"I have just spoken with [Finnish] President Sauli Niinistö to congratulate him on this historic occasion. Finland will formally join our alliance in the coming days," he added.

"Their membership will make Finland safer and NATO stronger." With Finland joining, Russia failed to prevent a further extension of NATO. Finland shares a border of 1309 kilometers, or 813 miles, with Russia.

Finland ended its neutrality and sought to join NATO, citing security concerns, after Russia invaded Ukraine in February last year. Yet Turkey and Hungary have declined to approve Sweden's application.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan claims Sweden protects "terrorists," but rights activists say they are peaceful political opponents of the Turkish leader.

Ankara seeks the extradition of dozens of Kurdish and other suspects it accuses of ties to outlawed militants and a failed 2016 coup attempt.

NATIONAL

Chhattisgarh's Nagri Dubraj rice variety gets geographical indication GI tag

The Geographical Indication Registry earlier this week granted Chhattisgarh's aromatic rice, Nagri Dubraj, a geographical indication (GI) tag facilitating the brand to get a unique identity and a wide market. Union Agriculture Minister, Narendra Singh Tomar in a tweet, said the Morena and Rewa Mango (both Madhya Pradesh) and Nagri Dubraj have been given GI tags. It will give a new identity to the products in the national and international market, Tomar added.

The authorities in Chhattisgarh have been making efforts to get the GI tag for Nagri Dubraj for a long time. The Indira Gandhi Agricultural University played a crucial role in getting the rights as it has been in constant correspondence with the authorities concerned, a state government spokesperson said. It is produced by a women's self-help group, the spokesperson added.

The women's self-help group "Maa Durga Swasahayata Samuh" of Nagri in Dhamtari district has been harvesting Dubraj and had applied to the GI tag. Last year, Chief Minister (CM) Bhupesh Baghel promised to take initiative, stating that he will ensure the "fragrance" of Dubraj returns to the farmers' fields. The Nagri Dubraj is known as the Basmati of Chhattisgarh because of its fragrance.

PM Modi to flag off Bhopal-Delhi Vande Bharat Express today : April 1

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to flag off the new Bhopal-Delhi Vande Bharat Express on April 1 from the Rani Kamalapati station in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal. "PM Modi will be visiting Madhya Pradesh. During his visit to Bhopal on April 1, he will give a big gift to the people of the state in the form of Vande Bharat Express," The 11th Vande Bharat Express train is said to cover a 708 km distance in around seven hours, and 45 minutes.

According to reports, the train may run from Bhopal's Rani Kamalapati station to Hazrat Nizamuddin station instead of New Delhi railway station - to save time by half an hour. The train will depart from Rani Kamalapati Railway Station at 5:55 am, make a five-minute stop at Agra Cantt Railway Station, and proceed to New Delhi at 1:45 pm. During return, the Vande Bharat express will depart from New Delhi at 2.45 pm and will reach the last stop Rani Kamalapati railway station at 10.45 pm. The train will provide a faster, comfortable, and convenient travel experience to rail users, the official release said. It is also set to boost tourism, and promote economic development in the region.

OBITUARY

Malayalam novelist and short story writer Sarah Thomas passes away at 88

Renowned Malayalam writer and Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award winner Sarah Thomas passed away in Thiruvananthapuram on Friday, March 31. The 88-year-old, whose wide repertoire of literary works includes at least 17 novels and more than a hundred short stories, had been suffering from age-related ailments for a while. She was at her daughter's residence in Nandavanam when she breathed her last.

Condoling the writer's demise, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said, "Sarah Thomas raised Malayalam literature to new levels of expressionism. Through her, Malayalam experienced nuanced reflections of the inner lives of people across caste and class hierarchies. Her

works had projected and upheld the feminine identity even before the feminist ideology began to gain traction in Malayalam literature.”

Sarah is best known for her novel Narmadipudava, for which she was presented with the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award in 1979. Narmadipudava is the tale of a Tamil Brahmin widow, tied to the shackles of caste and gender traditions in Kerala. Her 1982 novel Daivamakkal, its protagonist a Dalit medical student, is considered a seminal work in Kerala’s Dalit literature. It has been translated to English as Children of God by Sosanna Kuruvilla. In 2010, Sarah won a second Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for her contribution to Malayalam literature.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Odisha Day or Utkala Dibasa

Odisha day or Utkala Dibasa is celebrated on April 1. On this day in 1936, the state of Odisha came into being after its separation from Bengal province. It started with six districts but today it has 30 districts within its boundary.

From that day onwards, Utkala Divas is celebrated to honour the struggle of its people to have a separate state and promote unity among the citizens. Odisha day is celebrated as a restricted holiday and is also known as Vishuva Milan.

The whole state involves itself in the celebration of its foundation day. The celebrations are marked with cultural programs and events across the state. It also includes seminars and exhibitions focusing on the land’s rich heritage and tradition. Odisha day is a very big occasion for all Odias globally. Here are some wishes, quotes, and messages which you can share with your loved ones on this day.

RBI Foundation Day

The Reserve Bank of India was established[on 1 April 1935 in Kolkata, following the Reserve Bank of India Act of 1934. Though privately owned initially, it was nationalised in 1949 and since then fully owned by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India. The Reserve Bank of India, chiefly known as RBI, is India's central bank and regulatory body responsible for regulation of the Indian banking system. It is under the ownership of Ministry of Finance, Government of India. It is responsible for the control, issue and maintaining supply of the Indian rupee. It also manages the country's main payment systems and works to promote its economic development.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

PM Modi addresses joint commanders’ conference in Bhopal

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is on a day’s visit to Bhopal. He is attending the Joint Commanders’ conference of the three services which is being held at Kushabhau Thackeray International Convention Center in Bhopal. The theme of the conference is ‘Ready, Resurgent, Relevant’. Commanders of the three services and senior officials of the Ministry of Defense are participating in the conference. Commanders of the three services and senior officials of the Ministry of Defense are participating in the conference.

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NATIONAL

Jaipur to get India's 2nd largest cricket stadium named after Anil Agarwal

Vedanta's Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL) signed an MoU with the Rajasthan Cricket Association for the development of the world's third-largest and India's second largest cricket stadium in the village of Chonp in Jaipur. Vedanta's HZL will spend INR 300 crore on the stadium, one of the largest corporate investments in India's sports infrastructure. The stadium would be named as Anil Agarwal International Cricket Stadium, Jaipur. The highlights of the new stadium are -- it is the biggest cricket playing field in the world, is one of the world's biggest Cricket stadiums with a seating capacity of 75,000. (2nd largest in India and 3rd largest in the world), spread over 100 acres (4,04,685 sqm) biggest playing area and is well connected via Delhi-Jaipur Express Highway. The MoU was signed by Bhawani Shankar Samota, Honorary Secretary, Rajasthan Cricket Association and Arun Misra, CEO Hindustan Zinc in the presence of Dr. C.P. Joshi, Hon'ble Speaker, Rajasthan Vidhan Sabha and Chief Patron, RCA, Priya Agarwal Hebbar, Chairperson, Hindustan Zinc and Non-Executive Director, Vedanta Ltd. and Vaibhav Gehlot, President, Rajasthan Cricket Association.

Weeklong National Maritime Celebrations begins with PM wearing the 'First Merchant Navy Flag'

Gearing up for a week long celebration of National maritime Celebration from April 5, the 'First Merchant Navy Flag' was pinned on the lapel of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi by the Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush Shri Sarbananda Sonowal in presence of Sudhansh Pant, Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) and other senior officials in New Delhi today. A memento was also presented to the Prime Minister.

To mark the importance of the day government is celebrating by organising the National Maritime Week from 30.03.2023 to 05.04.2023 paying tribute to services of seafarers and celebrating the proud moment for India when the first Indian Steamship "S.S. LOYALTY" of M/s. Scindia Steam, Navigation Co. Ltd., Mumbai ventured into international waters on her maiden voyage from Mumbai to London (UK) in the year 1919 on this day and the same is marked as "National Maritime Day."

Defence Ministry signs more than Rs 9100 crore contracts for Akash Weapon System and Weapon locating Radars

The Ministry of Defence signs contracts for the procurement of an improved Akash Weapon System and 12 Weapon Locating Radars, WLR Swathi (Plains) for the Indian Army at an overall cost of over 9,100 crore rupees. The contract for procurement of improved Akash Weapon System (AWS) for the 3rd and 4th Regiments of Army Air Defence, comprising live Missiles and Launchers with upgrades, Ground Support Equipment, Vehicles and Infrastructure was signed with Bharat Dynamics Limited, worth over eight thousand 160 crore rupees.

The AWS is a Short Range Surface Air Missile (SRSAM) Air Defence System, indigenously designed and developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). To meet aerial threats, two additional Regiments of AWS with Upgradation are being procured for Indian Army for the Northern borders. Improved AWS has Seeker Technology, 360° Engagement Capability and improved environmental parameters.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Hero MotoCorp appoints company insider Niranjan Gupta as new CEO

Hero MotoCorp Ltd, India's biggest two-wheeler maker by volume, on Thursday named company insider Niranjan Gupta as its chief executive officer.

Gupta, currently chief financial officer at Hero MotoCorp, played a role in forming the bike maker's partnerships with Harley Davidson and electric-motorcycle maker Zero Motorcycles, the company said.

Pawan Munjal, Hero MotoCorp's current chief executive, will remain with the company as an executive chairman and full-time director on the board.

The development comes months after the company named Gupta as its head of strategy and M&A in December last year.

Tata Power re-appoints Praveer Sinha on positions of CEO, Managing Director

Tata Power on Thursday said it has re-appointed Praveer Sinha as the company's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director.

His re-appointment to the top post is for a period of four years from May 1, 2023, to April 30, 2027, subject to the approval of the members of the company, Tata Power said in a regulatory filing.

"Based on the recommendation of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, the Board, at its meeting held on March 30, 2023, approved the re-appointment of Praveer Sinha as the CEO & MD of the company," it added. His present tenure as a CEO and MD is scheduled to conclude on April 30, 2023.

"Under his current leadership, Tata Power is at the forefront of transforming itself from a century-old power utility company into a new-aged sustainable, technology-oriented and customer-centric green energy solutions company," the company said.

A PhD from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, Sinha is a visiting Research Associate at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Boston, USA.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Backup Day

World Backup Day on March 31st reminds us to protect our precious digital documents as we've become more reliant on technology.

There's always that one photo, video or memory that you took the time to save, yet for some reason, it's not yours anymore. Whether it was a lost or broken phone, a faulty hard drive or some other technological mishap, it can feel impossible to keep all your files in one piece.

Thankfully, the day before April Fools is World Backup Day, which saves us from being the punchline of a joke played by our own devices. It is the day when we finally stop saying, "I'll do it tomorrow," and make sure all our precious files find a safe space.

WHAT IS BACKUP ?

Answer - A backup is a second copy of all your important files — for example, your family photos, home videos, documents, and emails. Instead of storing it all in one place (like your computer), you keep another copy of everything somewhere safe.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Godrej group and SBI sign a strategic MoU to deepen partnership

Godrej Capital, the financial services arm of the Godrej Group has signed a strategic memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the State Bank of India (SBI) to deepen their partnership, wherein the latter would provide various financial products and offerings. Speaking on the development, Pirojsha Godrej, chairperson of Godrej Capital, said, "This partnership is a big step forward in making financial solutions more accessible and affordable. Together, we aim to unlock opportunities for financial inclusion and build a long-term, sustainable franchise, helping drive India's growth story forward."

This association leverages the strengths of both groups by facilitating a gamut of financial services provided by the bank, including, and not limited to, banking products, credit cards, wealth management, Life Insurance, and General Insurance as preferred partners.

Dinesh Khara, chairman of SBI, speaking on the announcement, said, "We are happy to embark on this exciting partnership with Godrej Capital. We aim to capitalize on synergies that will empower our customers and accelerate the growth of our economy. In addition, we will focus on delivering financial solutions to the Godrej group."

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Aditya Birla Health Insurance inks bancassurance partnership with UCO Bank

Aditya Birla Health Insurance Co Ltd (ABHICL), the health insurance joint venture of Aditya Birla Capital Ltd. (ABCL) has announced its bancassurance partnership with leading public sector lender, UCO Bank, for the distribution of health insurance products through the bank's branches across India.

This partnership will enable ABHICL to expand its national footprint by leveraging UCO Bank's widely distributed network of 3,164 branches and reach out to more than 40 million customers of the bank across India. Commenting on the association, UCO Bank MD & CEO - Soma Sankara Prasad said, "We are delighted to announce the Bank's new standalone health insurance partnership with Aditya Birla Health Insurance Company, which brings knowledge and expertise of innovative healthcare and Wellness Offerings. We are confident that this partnership will further support the bank in enhancing the customer experience by focussing on selling the right health insurance product to the customers and making the overall experience of insurance policy and claim settlement a smooth experience for the customers. With our customer-first approach we are happy to share Aditya Birla Health Insurance's innovative and health-first solutions with all our customers."

With this association, UCO Bank's customers and employees will have access to ABHICL's comprehensive suite of health-first insurance solutions like incentivized wellness benefits of up to 100% Health Returns and chronic management program, Day-1 cover for asthma, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes; wellness coaching on nutrition and fitness

and counselling on mental health. With the UCO Bank partnership, ABHICL now has 17 bancassurance partners with over 80,000 direct selling agents, across the country.

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INTERNATIONAL

Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan appointed as the Vice-President of UAE

The United Arab Emirates President, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, has made a significant announcement regarding the country's leadership. With the approval of the UAE Federal Supreme Council, Sheikh Mansour Bin Zayed Al Nahyan has been appointed as the UAE Vice-President. The incumbent Vice president Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, will also continue in the same role. Sheikh Mansour has been a vital part of the UAE's political landscape since 2004, when he was appointed as Minister of Presidential Affairs. He has played a key role in overseeing the Presidential Court and the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, as well as chairing several government institutions, including the Ministerial Development Council and the Emirates Investment Authority.

The new Vice-President is also the Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development and a member of the Abu Dhabi Supreme Petroleum Council. He has served on the boards of numerous investment institutions, including the National Archives, Abu Dhabi Development Fund, Board of Abu Dhabi Food Control Authority, and the Abu Dhabi Judicial Department.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

SpiceJet CMD Ajay Singh Takes Over As Assocham President

SpiceJet's Chairman & Managing Director Ajay Singh has assumed charge as the President of Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) replacing Renew Power MD Sumant Sinha after the completion of his tenure. Sanjay Nayar, founder and Chairman of Sorin Investment Fund is the new Senior Vice-President of Assocham, "I am taking over at times which are both exciting and challenging. As an economy, India stands out as a robust economy in the midst of global headwinds. Even when major economies of the world are facing the threat of recession, the Indian economy is growing between 6.5-7 per cent," Singh said.

He emphasised that the chamber would stay engaged with the government, Centre and states, leading academicians, economists besides corporate leaders to find solutions to the issues, which may crop up in a fast-changing global economic and political landscape.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of Zero Waste

On 14 December 2022, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution at its seventy-seventh session to proclaim 30 March as International Day of Zero Waste, to be observed annually. Türkiye, with 105 other countries, put forward the resolution. It follows other resolutions focused on waste, including "End plastic pollution: towards an internationally legally binding instrument", adopted at the United Nations Environment Assembly on 2 March 2022.

The International Day of Zero Waste aims to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns and raise awareness about how zero-waste initiatives contribute to the advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Humanity generates an estimated 2.24 billion tons of municipal solid waste annually, of which only 55 per cent is managed in controlled facilities. By 2050, this could rise to 3.88 billion tons per year. The waste sector is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in urban settings and biodiversity loss. Around 931 million tons of food is wasted each year, and up to 37 million tons of plastic waste is expected to enter the ocean annually by 2040.

In line with the theme for International Day of Zero Waste 2023 - 'Achieving sustainable and environmentally sound practices of minimizing and managing waste',

Rajasthan Day / Rajasthan Diwas

Rajasthan, the Land of Kings is synonymous with heroism, royalty and honour. Historic tales of battles fought and romance of the riches adorn the walls of the state. Established in the era marked with wartime ballads yet living in the modern period, the region is a travellers' destination.

30th March 2023, marks the 74th Foundation Day of the state. The state was formed this day in 1949. The history of the region dates back to around 5,000 years. Before being called Rajputana, the region was called 'Gujratha', the land protected by Gujjars. But it was during this time that Rajputana (the name adopted by the British to manage the dependencies in the region) was merged into India.

Rajasthan is the largest state in the country by area and covers 10.4% of India's total area. It shares its border with five major Indian states- Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. Around 25% of the National Capital Region (NCR) falls in the state. Rajasthan provides access to around 40% of India's market in the neighbouring states and also serves as an indispensable medium of transport between North-Indian states and the ports on the Western coastline of India.

Swachhotsav-2023' was held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

Under 'Swachh Bharat Mission' a special workshop under 'Swachhotsav-2023' was held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on the occasion of 'International Zero Garbage Day' on March 30th in the presence of Union Urban Development and Housing Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.

Commissioner of the Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation (NMMC) Rajesh Narvekar participated in the seminar on innovative initiatives for a waste-free city and presented three unique concepts on behalf of the NMMC. All the three innovative concepts presented by the Commissioner were appreciated at the national level. "Swachhotsav-2023" has been organized at the national level to increase women's participation and leadership in cleanliness, in which Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation has enthusiastically participated. The Municipal Corporation has always used innovative concepts in cleanliness.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Arunachal Pradesh To Sign MoA With CPSU For Hydropower Development

The Arunachal Pradesh cabinet, in a meeting, chaired by chief minister Pema Khandu gave “go ahead” for the proposed signing of the memorandum of agreement (MoA) with Central Public Sector Undertaking (CPSU) for development of hydropower in the state.

The signing of the MoA is expected to unlock the potential 5 hydroelectric projects (HEPs) with an installed capacity of 2820 MW in Arunachal Pradesh.

The cabinet approved the MoA to be signed with CPSU for development of hydropower in the state. This will pave the way to unlocking potential 5 HEPs with an installed capacity of 2820 MW. This will spur huge investment in the State and generate employment,” a statement from the Arunachal Pradesh CMO said. Further, the Arunachal Pradesh cabinet gave its nod to ‘recall’ the order of new chairman and members of APPSC (Arunachal Pradesh Public Service Commission) and recommended the same to governor for recalling the appointment orders of February 7, 2023.

1st G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group meeting to begin at Gandhinagar: 30 March

The First G20 Disaster Risk Reduction Working Group meeting under India’s G20 Presidency will begin today at Gandhinagar in Gujarat. Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister Dr P K Mishra and Minister of State for Communication Devusinh Chauhan, will inaugurate the meeting.

Addressing the media at Gandhinagar, Member Secretary of National Disaster Management Authority Kamal Kishore said that five priority areas have been identified for the meeting which include an early warning for all, resilient infrastructure and improving the National system for financing Disaster Risk Reduction. Around 100 delegates from the G20 member countries, invitee countries and from nine International organisations are participating in the three day event.

During the meeting, two side events are planned on ‘Early Warning system and Disaster Resilient Infrastructure’. On the third day of the meeting, the participating delegates will be taken on a field visit to Smritivan Earthquake Memorial and Museum at Bhuj. The event also provides an opportunity to the delegates to get a glimpse of cultural heritage of Gujarat.

2nd G20 Sherpa meeting under India’s G20 Presidency will begin in Kerala: 30 March

The second G20 Sherpa meeting under India’s G20 Presidency will begin today at the picturesque Kumarakom village in Kerala’s Kottayam district. Over 120 delegates, drawn from G20 member nations, representatives of nine invitee countries and various international and regional organizations will attend the four-day event, chaired by India’s G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant.

The multilateral discussions at the meeting will focus on G20’s economic and developmental priorities as well as contemporary global challenges. A range of cross-cutting issues of global concern, and the work being done under the 13 working groups

under the Sherpa track will form part of the deliberations during the meet. Two high-level side events on Digital Public Infrastructure and Green Development will also be held today. The Kumarakom meet will take forward the outcomes of various Sherpa Track and Finance Track meetings and form the basis of the Leader's Declaration, slated to be adopted at the New Delhi Summit in September later this year.

MoD signs 3 defence contracts worth ₹5,400 cr for Army, Navy

The Ministry of Defence on Wednesday signed three contracts worth ₹5,400 crore with defence PSUs for procurement of automated air defence control and reporting system, Sarang electronic support measure systems and advanced Communication Satellite GSAT 7B.

The first contract with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) pertains to procurement of Automated Air Defence Control and Reporting System 'Project Akashteer' at a cost of ₹1,982 crore for the Indian Army,

The second contract, also with the BEL, is for acquisition of Sarang Electronic Support Measure (ESM) systems along with associated engineering support package at an overall cost of ₹412 crore for the Indian Navy,

Other than that, both the projects will encourage participation of Indian electronics and associated industries, including MSMEs, who are sub-vendors of the BEL, believes the MoD. The third contract with New Space India Limited (NSIL), a Central Public Sector Enterprise under Department of Space, Bengaluru, is for procurement of an advanced communication satellite, GSAT 7B, which will provide high throughput services to the Indian Army, at an overall cost of ₹2,963 crore.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Govt introduces surcharge for Gpay, other payment apps; no charge to customers

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has issued a circular in which it suggested "Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPI)" fees on merchant transactions on Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

The governing body of the UPI payment system added that the PPI fees would be levied on transactions above ₹2,000 on UPI. It will result in an interchange at 1.1% of the transaction value.

However, the NPCI has clarified that there will be zero charges for the bank account to bank account-based UPI payments or normal UPI payments.

With this addition to UPI, the customers will have the choice of using any bank account, RuPay Credit card and prepaid wallets on UPI-enabled apps.

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INTERNATIONAL

Africa Announces Its Second Marburg Outbreak in Tanzania This Year

On March 21, health officials announced a Marburg outbreak after the continent's first outbreak on February 25 reported by the World Health Organization. Marburg virus, a hemorrhagic fever virus, is often referred to as the 'cousin' of ebola which caused around

11,325 deaths from 2014 to 2016 in West Africa. According to the WHO, Equatorial Guinea's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare announced the mortality of several people with probable hemorrhagic fever on February 7, 2023. Real-time polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) testing on one sample yielded affirmative results for the Marburg virus on February 12, 2023, at the Institute Pasteur in Dakar, Senegal.

Tanzania's national public health laboratory has declared that the outbreak first reported last week was caused by Marburg, according to Ummu Mwalimu, the country's health minister. One of the instances involves a household of five, and at least 161 individuals in close contact are being watched.

"We are working with the government to rapidly scale up control measures to halt the spread of the virus and end the outbreak as soon as possible," says WHO's regional director for Africa Matshidiso Moeti in a statement.

NATIONAL

India welcomes four cubs - born to Cheetah translocated from Namibia

Happy news from the world of wildlife! India has been blessed with four cheetah cubs. Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav on Wednesday, March 29 shared that four cubs have been born to one of the cheetahs translocated to India on September 17, 2022. Cheetah Siyaya delivered the four cubs at Kuno National Park

The Union Environment Minister called the occasion a 'momentous event' in our wildlife conservation history during Amrit Kaal. Further, the Union Minister also congratulated the entire team of Project Cheetah for their relentless efforts in bringing back cheetahs to India and for their efforts in correcting an ecological wrong done in the past.

It is noteworthy that cheetah got extinct from India about 70 years ago. The wild cat was declared extinct from India in 1952.

Government of India launches National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP) for prevention and control of Rabies

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Ministry of Fisheries Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Government of India jointly launched 'National Action Plan For Dog Mediated Rabies Elimination (NAPRE) from India by 2030'. The stray dog population control and management of the stray dogs is the mandate of the local bodies. The Central Government has framed the Animal Birth Control (Dogs) Rules, 2023 which is to be implemented by the local authority to control the population of stray dogs. The main focus of the rules is on anti-rabies vaccination of stray dogs and neutering of stray dogs as means of population stabilization.

Further, as per the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in its interim orders dated 18.11.2015 & 9.3.2016 in SLP No.691 of 2009, AWBI Vs P.E.S.T & Ors directed all the State Governments to implement the ABC (Dogs) Rules, 2001 diligently to control the stray dog population, to constitute the State Level Monitoring Committee & District Level Monitoring Committee to address the issues related to stray dogs in the respective local bodies. Accordingly, the Animal Welfare Board of India has also forwarded a revised module to all the State Governments regarding the proper implementation of the Animal Birth Control programme. In addition, the Animal Welfare Board of India has issued

following advisories / guidelines for proper implementation of the Animal Birth Control Rules.

Odisha's historic Gandhamardan Hills declared as biodiversity heritage site

Odisha's Gandhamardan Hill range, known as the "ayurvedic paradise," has been designated a "biodiversity heritage site." The hill system that spans both Bargarh and Bolangir districts was designated a biodiversity heritage site by the Department of Forestry, Environment, and Climate Change. Gandhamardan is home to 1,200 plant species, 500 animal species, and several varieties of trees, shrubs, herbs, and medicinal plant species. The tag will aid in the long-term protection, conservation, and management of the species that are classified as endangered and endemic. After the Mahendragiri Hills in Gajapati and the Mandasaru Hills in the Kandhamal district, this is the third such hill to get the designation of a biological heritage site.

According to a notification from the state forest and environment department, the designation was made in accordance with Rule 20(2) of the 2012 Odisha Biodiversity Regulations and Section 37 of the Biodiversity Act.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

NDTV Appoints Former SEBI Chairman UK Sinha And Business Leader Dipali Goenka As Independent Directors

In line with the Adani Group's objective to ensure NDTV's independence and professionalism, U.K. Sinha and Dipali Goenka have been appointed Independent Directors of NDTV for a period of two years effective March 27, 2023, based on the recommendations of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee, and subject to the approval of shareholders and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. U.K. Sinha has also been designated as Non-Executive Chairperson of NDTV.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Ministry of External Affairs organises seminar on - Seven Decades of the Constitution of India

The Union Minister of State for External Affairs, Meenakshi Lekhi, inaugurated the seminar on 'Seven Decades of the Constitution of India' on March 28.

The Ministry of External Affairs organised the Seminar on the occasion of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav in collaboration with the Parliamentary Research and Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE) at the Parliament Library Building. The Seminar was also organised in the context of India's Presidency of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organisation (AALCO).

The Seminar covered the following themes :

- 1 - Seven decades of the Indian Constitution
- 2 - Indian Constitution and Human Rights
- 3 - Indian Constitution and Internationalism

Justice Ranjan Gogoi, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and former Chief Justice of India; Justice Arun Mishra, Chairperson of National Human Rights Commission and former Supreme Court Judge; and Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel, Chairperson of National Green Tribunal and former Supreme Court judge, were the speakers at the Seminar.

India To Host SCO National Security Advisors Meet Today; 29 March

As the current chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), India will today host the meeting of National Security Advisors (NSA) and top officials in New Delhi. Pakistan and China are likely to attend the SCO-NSA meeting virtually.

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval will make opening remarks at the meeting, The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an intergovernmental organization established in 2001 and it comprises eight member states, namely, India, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In 2022, India assumed the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Chairship for 2023.

Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Nikolai Patrushev, will attend the annual meeting of the secretaries of security councils of SCO member states in New Delhi on Wednesday,

India became a full member of SCO on June 9 in 2017. There are four Observer States viz Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia and six dialogue partners - Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Turkey.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a major regional powerhouse that was established over two decades ago with the aim of promoting economic, political, and military cooperation among its member nations. The eight-member countries of SCO represent around 42 per cent of the world's total population and 25 per cent of the global GDP.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Aaliya Mir Becomes The First Woman From J&K To Receive Wildlife Conservation Award

Jammu and Kashmir's only female wildlife rescuer, Aaliya Mir who works as a project manager with Wildlife SOS, a non-governmental organisation established in 1995 to protect and conserve India's natural heritage, forests and wildlife, has been awarded by the administration for her work and conservation efforts.

Aaliya, a wildlife conservationist has become the first woman from J&K to be felicitated with an award for her conservation efforts in the region.

Despite having rescued Asiatic black bears, Himalayan brown bears, birds, leopards and other mammals, Aaliya is best known for her work with snakes.

Over the years, she has rescued snakes from the most unlikely places like kitchens, lawns, gardens and toilets of residences, government buildings and offices, school and university premises, and from tyres and engines of vehicles.

NGO from Assam honoured with Children's Champion Award

Students' Welfare Mission, an NGO from Assam's Pathsala which has been working for special and autistic children, has been conferred with the Children's Champion Award 2023 here. Instituted by the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights last year to recognise individuals and institutions that have championed the cause of children across education, justice, health, nutrition, sports and artistic expression categories, the Mission, which is popularly known as Tapoban, has been awarded in the health and nutrition category,

The awards were handed out by Justice P S Narasimha of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice of the Odisha High Court S Muralidhar and Delhi Education Minister Atishi Marlena at a function held here on Saturday. Founder president of the Mission, Kumud Kalita, received the award that carries Rs 75,000, a certificate and a plaque. A jury comprising eminent and accomplished individuals decided to confer the Children's Champion Award on the NGO in health and nutrition category for their "consistent efforts to provide quality care to the children with special needs", the release said.

The NGO is the only organisation from the Northeast to be selected for the award. The DCPCR received altogether 1,100 nominations from organisations and individuals across the country. Set up in 2005, Tapoban has been working for the specially-abled children providing speech therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, music and other skills besides awareness.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

NPCI recommends additional charges for merchant transactions via UPI

A recent circular issued by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has suggested that Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI) charges be applied from April 1 for merchant transactions made using the Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

NPCI, UPI's governing body, will review the stated pricing on or before September 30, 2023.

According to the NPCI circular, using PPIs on UPI will attract interchange at 1.1 percent of the transaction value for transactions worth over Rs 2,000.

Once the additional charges come into effect, the PPI issuer will be paying around 15 basis points as a wallet-loading service charge to the remitter bank. No interchange in terms of peer-to-peer (P2P) or peer-to-peer-merchant (P2PM) transactions between the bank account and the PPI wallet will apply.

World Bank approves USD 363 million loan to Karnataka for rural water supply programme

The World Bank has approved a USD 363 million loan to Karnataka, to provide a clean drinking water supply to two million rural households in the state through a piped water connection in their homes.

According to a World Bank statement, the Karnataka Sustainable Rural Water Supply Program will support the Government of Karnataka's ambition to provide functioning tap water connections to every rural household in the state.

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INTERNATIONAL

Humza Yousaf Elected Leader Of Scottish National Party

Pakistani-origin Humza Yousaf has won the Scottish National Party leadership contest and is set to become Scotland's First Minister replacing Nicola Sturgeon. The 37-year-old son of Asian immigrants is set to become the first person of colour to serve as Scotland's first minister,

The Scot of Pakistani heritage, a Sturgeon loyalist, defeated Kate Forbes, the country's finance minister and Ash Regan, who quit the government in opposition to proposed changes to gender recognition,

"I will be a First Minister for all of Scotland. I will work every minute of every day to earn and to re-earn your respect and your trust," Yousaf said in his acceptance speech.

Yousaf won 52% of the final votes cast, running on a platform dedicated to delivering Scottish independence, combating the cost-of-living crisis.

IAEA Board reappoints Rafael Grossi as director general

The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Friday reappointed Rafael Grossi as the agency's director general for a second four-year term. The IAEA said in a statement that its 35-nation Board adopted the decision by acclamation at its quarterly meeting. The reappointment is subject to approval by the annual General Conference of the agency's all 176 member states in September. Grossi is slated to begin his second term in early December 2023 .

"I'm deeply honored by the Board's unanimous decision to appoint me for another term in office, and very grateful for the confidence and trust member states continue to place in me as head of this truly remarkable organization," Grossi said.

"It comes at a time when we face many major challenges, and I'm fully committed to continue to do everything in my power to implement the IAEA's crucial mission in support of global peace and development," he added. Grossi has served as head of the United Nations nuclear watchdog since December 2019

NATIONAL

AFINDEX 2023: Second Africa-India joint military exercise another step towards Modi's idea of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"

The second Africa-India joint military exercise from 21-29 March is a key element to India's diplomatic ties with African countries. 24 African militaries were represented by their contingents or teams of observers. The inaugural event of the second edition of the Africa-India Field Training Exercise (AFINDEX 2023) began at the Foreign Training Node of the Indian Army located at the Aundh Military Station in Pune on March 21. The ten-day exercise focused on Humanitarian Mine Assistance and United Nations Peacekeeping Operations(UNPKF). The multinational military drill will promote the idea of Africa-India Militaries for Regional Unity (AMRUT) and will focus on incorporating the current dynamics of UNPKF through comprehensive discussions and tactical exercises.

The collective effort will also focus on achieving the desired interoperability and cohesive operational ability of the troops from all participating nations. Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (Sanskrit: वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्) or "The World Is One Family" or all living beings on the earth are a family has been the favourite theme of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi all along. The theme and the logo for India's G20 Presidency are "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or "One Earth-One Future". The Bhagavad Gita, calls the Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam the "Loftiest Vedantic Thought." This is what is expected to be achieved through the Second Africa-India joint military exercise.

Sasha, one of the female cheetahs brought to India from Namibia, has died

Sasha was part of the first lot of eight cheetahs brought to India from Namibia last year, which were released into Kuno National Park by prime minister Narendra Modi on September 17. On January 22 this year, Sasha had been diagnosed with a kidney infection and had been treated by a global team of veterinarians. She initially showed signs of recovery, but continued to be kept in the quarantine enclosure to which she had regressed to after having spent a few weeks in a larger enclosure.

Though Sasha had shown signs of recovery, she was being fed within the quarantine enclosure. However, her condition suddenly deteriorated, and she died on Monday (27 March) morning. Sources from the Cheetah Conservation Fund say that they suspect renal failure to be the cause of her death,

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Mumbai to host 1st Trade & Investment Working Group meeting Under G20

Investment and trade are key drivers of growth and employment creation and in order to find common solutions, it is important to create a shared knowledge of the difficulties that come while accelerating global trade and investment. With this aim, the 1st Trade and Investment Working Group (TIWG) meeting under India's G20 Presidency is scheduled to be held in the financial capital of India, Mumbai, from March 28–30, 2023. Over 100 representatives from G20 member nations, invitee nations, regional groups, and international organisations will participate in this three-day meeting to discuss ways to speed up international trade and investment.

On the first day, a seminar on 'Trade Finance' will be conducted by the Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC) and India EXIM Bank. The two-panel talks will take place to discuss the role of banks, financial institutions, development finance institutions, and export credit agencies in closing the trade finance gap. The seminar will also focus on how digitalisation and fintech solutions can improve access to trade finance.

Key agendas that will be discussed during the first sessions:-

Current trends in international trade and trade finance amidst the pandemic and growing import bills in developing countries.

Cause of trade finance gaps, including reduced credit line support in the private sector and inflation cuts into bank lending limits.

The role of export credit agencies in bolstering trade finance

India-Africa Army Chiefs Conclave On March 28 And 29

Pune will also host the strategically significant India-Africa Army Chiefs Conclave, on March 28 and 29. The conclave will include talks by renowned speakers on the India-Africa Defense partnership, the Indian defence industry's potential and contribution towards regional security.

There is a natural feeling of partnership between India and Africa," remarked Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today (March 28) while addressing the first India-Africa Army Chiefs' Conclave. The event is being organised on the sidelines of the second Africa-India Joint Exercise 'AFINDEX'

India has been one of the biggest contributors of troops to UN Peacekeeping Operations all over the world and the country's Army is considered to be among the expert agencies in the world in mine removal operations.

Gentari signs pact (MoU) with Tata Motors for 5,000 e-commercial vehicles

Clean energy solutions provider Gentari on Monday said it has signed an agreement with Tata Motors for the delivery of 5,000 units of e-commercial vehicles.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) through its affiliate entity is for three years, Gentari said in a statement. "Gentari, through its affiliated entity Amplus Power Supply Private Limited, signed an MoU with Tata Motors, India's largest commercial vehicle manufacturer, in 2022, whereby the latter will deliver 5,000 units of Tata Ace EV, over three years. The MoU includes delivery of 1,000 units in the first year for deployment in cities, such as Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune and Kolkata," it said.

High-quality electric four-wheelers coming into the market opens a whole new segment to electrify in the urban delivery ecosystem, MoEving CEO Vikash Mishra said.

"We are excited to work with Gentari to deploy three- and four-wheeler commercial electric vehicles across India to reduce the carbon footprint of deliveries. With our operations, charging and maintenance footprint spanning across India, we hope to bring change on-ground and electrify deliveries for e-commerce, e-grocery, the logistics segment and now also large FMCG and traditional companies,"

Telangana signs three MoUs with Western Australia government

A total of three MoUs were signed between the governments of Telangana and Western Australia when a delegation led by Western Australia's Minister for Emergency Services, Innovation and Digital Economy, Stephen Dawson visited State-led startup incubators T-Hub and WE-Hub.

The MoUs signed include one between Hyderabad's Cyber Security Centre of Excellence DSCI and Western Australia's CyberWest, a government-funded innovation hub, which will harness the expertise of both organisations using innovation, design, workshops and industry engagement. The second MoU was between Cyber Security Centre of Excellence DSCI and Edith Cowan University, through this there will be a collaboration for mutual benefit including research, education, innovation, incubation, marketing, hackathons, corporate innovation and training programs.

The third MoU was a Letter of Intent between WE-Hub and CyberWest which will accelerate growth in the local and international ecosystem and support goals of diversity and inclusion within the cyber security sector. This collaboration will also help in seeding female-led cyber security startups and also integrating cyber safety into all cohorts.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Dawson said: "Western Australia is at the forefront of cyber security research and innovation with leading organisations. The purpose of this visit is to engage with the Telangana ecosystem and understand the priorities as well as convey.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

AuditOnline Application Wins WSIS Prizes 2023 for Online Audits in India

The AuditOnline Application has received global recognition for its contribution in facilitating online audits across Panchayati Raj Institutions in India. The software program

was awarded the prestigious World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Prizes 2023 in the Action Line category ICT Applications: e-Government at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) headquarters in Geneva.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), along with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), has been recognized for its efforts in developing the AuditOnline application. The application enables the online audit of all Panchayati Raj Institutions, and its success has earned the team the WSIS Prizes Award 2023.

The application was submitted under the category “C7 – ICT Applications: e-Government” in the 12th edition of the contest. The WSIS Prizes recognize the excellence of stakeholders in supporting the implementation of WSIS outcomes, WSIS Action Lines, and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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INTERNATIONAL

First Citizens Bank to Acquire Failed Silicon Valley Bank

First Citizens BancShares will acquire Silicon Valley Bank, the California lender whose collapse this month sent shock waves across the financial sector.

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation seized control of Silicon Valley Bank on March 10, after a run on deposits had left it insolvent. The F.D.I.C., which announced the deal late Sunday, has since been looking for a buyer for the bank, either in its entirety or in pieces. Silicon Valley Bank was the country's 16th-largest bank when the government took it over. Its collapse was the largest bank failure in the United States since the 2008 financial crisis. The deal for the bank, which became Silicon Valley Bridge Bank after the F.D.I.C. seized it, included the purchase of about \$72 billion in loans, at a discount of \$16.5 billion, and the transfer of deposits worth \$56 billion. Roughly \$90 billion in Silicon Valley Bank's securities and other assets were not included in the sale, and remained in the F.D.I.C.'s control.

NATIONAL

Shri Bhupender Yadav launches Aravalli Green Wall Project

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav said that under Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi India is moving to revive the Aravallis through various initiatives like single-use plastic ban, water conservation efforts and natural resources protection. Shri Yadav launched the Aravalli Green Wall Project, a major initiative to green the 5 km buffer area around the Aravalli Hill Range in four states at a function organised to celebrate the International Day of Forests at Tikli Village in Haryana. At the event, Shri Yadav unveiled the National Action Plan to Combat Desertification and Land Degradation Through Forestry Interventions and a FAQ on Agro-forestry published by Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education. The Union Minister also participated in a plantation drive

Speaking on this occasion, the Union Minister said that the Aravalli Green Wall Project will not only increase the green cover and biodiversity of the Aravalli through afforestation, reforestation and restoration of water bodies, but also improve the soil fertility, water availability and climate resilience of the region. He said that the project will benefit the

local communities by providing them with employment opportunities, income generation and ecosystem services. He appreciated the efforts of the Haryana Forest Department and other stakeholders for their cooperation and support in implementing the project and reiterated the government's commitment to achieve the national goal of creating an additional 2.5 billion tonnes of carbon sink by 2030.

OBITUARY

Actor and former MP Innocent passes away at 75

Veteran Malayalam actor and former member of Parliament Innocent Vareed Thekkethala passes away at 75 in a private hospital in Kochi on Sunday. After learning about the unfortunate event, several celebrities took to their social media handles and mourned the death of the late actor.

The actor, a cancer survivor was reportedly not keeping well for some time and was admitted to the hospital on March 3 with respiratory problems.

Saddened by the death, Prithviraj Sukumaran took to Twitter and wrote, "End of an iconic chapter in cinema history! Rest in peace Legend! #Innocent."

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Theatre Day

World Theatre Day was initiated in 1962 by the International Theatre Institute (ITI). It is celebrated annually on 27 March by ITI Centres and the international theatre community. Various national and international theatre events are organized to mark this occasion. One of the most important of these is the circulation of the World Theatre Day International Message through which at the invitation of ITI, a figure of world stature shares his or her reflections on the theme of Theatre and a Culture of Peace. The first World Theatre Day International Message was written by Jean Cocteau (France) in 1962. It was first in Helsinki, and then in Vienna at the 9th World Congress of the ITI in June 1961 that President Arvi Kivimaa proposed on behalf of the Finnish Centre of the International Theatre Institute that a World Theatre Day be instituted. The proposal, backed by the Scandinavian centres, was carried with acclamation.

SUMMIT'S & MOU's

Second meeting of Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group to begin at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar

The second meeting of the Environment and Climate Sustainability Working Group will begin at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar today. Representatives from more than 30 countries and several international organizations will take part in the event. The meeting will be formally inaugurated tomorrow in the presence of Union Minister Darshana Jardosh. Representatives from more than 30 countries and several international organizations will take part in the event. The three-day meeting will focus on three priority areas such as biodiversity and land degradation, Encouraging resource efficiency in the circular economy, and promoting the sustainable and climate-resilient blue economy.

AIR correspondent reports that the G 20 representatives were accorded a traditional welcome at the Ahmedabad Airport. The three-day meet will commence today with a side event on Water Resource management during which India's capabilities to make water

accessible to all will be showcased. All the G 20 countries will also demonstrate their best practices of Water Resource Management. Later, the delegates will be taken on an excursion to the ancient stepwell Adalaj ni Vav which will demonstrate the long-standing Indian tradition of water conservation. They will also be taken to Engineering Marvels Sabarmati Siphon structure and Sabarmati Escape. During the meeting, various water management interventions of the Indian Government such as Namami Gange, Jal Jeevan Mission, Jal Shakti Abhiyan will be showcased.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

M T Vasudevan Nair awarded state's highest civilian honour

The "Kerala Jyothi," the highest civilian honor in Kerala was awarded to the writer M T Vasudevan Nair. The second-highest award, "Kerala Prabha," was shared by actor Mammooty, former civil service officer T Madhava Menon, and writer Omchery NN Pillai. Arif Muhammad Khan, the Governor of Kerala, has presented the inaugural edition of the "Kerala Puraskarngal" awards, which recognize individuals who have made notable contributions to various aspects of social life. The awards were presented in three categories – "Kerala Jyothi," "Kerala Prabha," and "Kerala Shri."

BANKING AND ECONOMY

ICICI Lombard becomes first to offer 'Anywhere Cashless' feature

In an industry-first, ICICI Lombard General Insurance launched 'Anywhere Cashless' feature for health insurance policyholders to avail cashless facilities at any hospital, even if not part of ICICI Lombard's current network of hospitals.

The feature will be subject to the hospital's acceptance of the cashless facility.

Policyholders must inform the company 24 hours prior to the date of admission by giving basic information about the patient, policy details, hospital name, diagnosis and treating doctor, among others.

Initially launched as a pilot, the facility can now be availed through the 'IL TakeCare' application across India, wherein customers will not have to bear any out-of-pocket expenses. It provides a hassle-free experience through all aspects of the journey: from admission to discharge, and lets customers choose a nearby or recommended hospital,

Government hikes wage under MGNREGA scheme: Effective from April 1

The Central government has published a notification for the rural employment guarantee programme for the financial year 2023-24, announcing a hike in the wage rate with Haryana having the highest daily wage at ₹357 per day. While the states like Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh have the lowest wage rate of ₹221.

On March 24, the Union Ministry of Rural Development announced changes to the notification issued under Section 6 (1) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) Scheme's wage rates. The new wage rates ranging from Rs.7 to Rs.26, will come into effect from April 1, 2023.

Up from Rs.231 in 2022–2023, Rajasthan received a Rs.255 wage rate, the highest percentage of salary growth compared to the prior year's rates. Compared to the previous year, Bihar and Jharkhand have seen a percentage rise of about eight. In these two regions, MNREGA worker received Rs.210 per day in wages last year, now the price has been

changed to Rs 228. With daily earnings at Rs.221, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh have the lowest percentage growth from the previous year, at 17. The daily wage in these two regions was Rs.204 for the year 2022–2023.

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NATIONAL

Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, I&B Minister Anurag Thakur flag off first Delhi-Dharamshala Flight

Union Minister for Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya Scindia and Minister for Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur today flagged off the first Indigo Airline Delhi-Dharamshala-Delhi flight in New Delhi.

Indigo airline will operate daily flights on this route.

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Thakur expressed his gratitude towards the Ministry of Civil Aviation for facilitating Indigo connectivity to Himachal Pradesh. He said, this flight will benefit half of the State population. He added that Indigo could not have become a truly national airline without flying to the hill state. Mr. Thakur credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the rapid expansion of airport infrastructure in the country. He said the number has gone from 74 to over 140 in a short span of time. He further said that it is due to the UDAN scheme that the people in Hawaii Chappal can travel in Hawaii Jahaz.

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah inaugurates Gorata Martyr Memorial and SardarVallabhbhai Patel Memorial in Bidar, Karnataka

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah inaugurated Gorata Martyr Memorial and SardarVallabhbhai Patel Memorial and also unfurled the 103 feet high tricolor at Gorata ground in Bidar, Karnataka today. On this occasion, former Chief Minister of Karnataka Shri B. S. Yediyurappa and many other dignitaries were present. Paying tributes to the country's first Home Minister SardarVallabhbhai Patel, Shri Amit Shah said that had Iron Man SardarVallabhbhai Patel not been there, Hyderabad and Bidar would never have become independent. This monument of Sardar Patel is a symbol of liberation of the people of Hyderabad-Karnataka-Marathwada from the cruel rule of the Nizam. Shri Shah said that today is a very important day because in 1948, at this place, the Nizam killed hundreds of people for hoisting a two-and-a-half-feet tricolor and I am fortunate to hoist a 103-feet tall tricolor at the same place.

SPORTS

Mumbai Indians beat Delhi Capitals to be crowned as the champions of the inaugural edition of the WPL (WPL-2023)

Mumbai Indians, on Sunday, March 26, became the champions of the inaugural edition of the Women's Premier League (WPL) after beating Delhi Capitals (DC) by seven wickets at the Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai.

DC's innings can be segregated into two halves – The first 16 overs followed by the last four. In the first 16 overs, the Capitals found themselves in all sorts of strife. Barring Meg

Lanning, no other batter looked secured in the middle. Just when Lanning was needed to stay until the end, she got run out after scoring 35 runs off 29 balls with five fours. As far as the awards are concerned, there was complete dominance from MI, with Hayley Matthews dominating by taking home both the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award and the purple cap. Interestingly, Matthews went unsold in the first round of the auction before being picked up at the base price by MI in the accelerated round, And the Orange cap was begged by Meg Lanning.

Saweety Boora & Nitu Ghanghas Clinch Gold Medals For India At Women's World Boxing Championships

Saweety Boora defeated Wang Lina of China in the 81kg category final to bag India's second gold medal at the ongoing Women's World Boxing Championships. The Indian pugilist registered a 4-3 win. It was a neck-and-neck battle between Saweety and China's Wang Lina, but the Indian star eventually beat the latter by a narrow margin. Earlier on Saturday, Nitu Ghanghas outplayed Lutsaikhan Altansetseg of Mongolia in the 48kg category final by a unanimous 5-0 verdict to bag a gold medal. She became the sixth Indian woman pugilist to win a gold in the history of the tournament, before Saweety became the seventh to do so.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

ISRO deploys 36 OneWeb satellites in space in textbook mission

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Sunday launched 36 OneWeb satellites into space on its heaviest launch vehicle - The LVM-III in a textbook mission. The spacecraft lifted off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota to Low Earth Orbit with probes from the UK-based company.

The OneWeb constellation is a network of satellites around the planet that are aimed at providing broadband connectivity across the world. The UK company is implementing a constellation of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites. India's Bharti Enterprises serves as a major investor and shareholder in OneWeb.

The deployment complete the first constellation of 648 satellites around the planet by the UK company. The satellites are divided into 12 planes and operate at an altitude of 1200 kilometers above the planet.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Dilma Rousseff the New BRICS bank chief

The Board of Governors of the New Development Bank (NDB) unanimously elected H.E. Mrs. Dilma Vana Rousseff as the President of the Bank, effective immediately, in full accordance with the Articles of Agreement of the New Development Bank and the procedures of the President election," the NDB said in a statement on Friday.

In a press statement earlier this month, NDB had said: "NDB President Marcos Troyjo will step down by March 24, 2023. The Board of Governors of the NDB will then elect a new President nominated by Brazil, to fulfil the incumbent rotating mandate expiring on July 6, 2025. After the election, the new President takes office".

IMPORTANT DAYS

Purple Day of Epilepsy

Celebrated annually on March 26, Epilepsy Awareness Day, or Purple Day, was created to increase the public's understanding of this brain disorder and to eliminate the fear and stigma surrounding it. With over 3.5 million people diagnosed with epilepsy in the U.S. and over 50 million worldwide, it is likely you know someone living with the day-to-day challenges epilepsy brings. The good news is epilepsy can be easily managed if diagnosed and treated correctly, so awareness and research are important.

Epilepsy is a chronic disorder of the brain that affects brain's ability to transmit electrical impulses which could lead to seizures. Epilepsy cannot be cured but can be managed with medication and a series of lifestyle changes. Controlling the triggers of the disorder can reduce the number of seizures one experience. While not skipping medication is most important, there are certain lifestyle factors that can greatly reduce the risk of seizures. Not sleeping well is one of the most common triggers for seizures and one must develop a proper sleep routine and do regular exercise for sound sleep. A balanced diet with all the essential nutrients, reduced stress and leading a healthy social life can all prevent seizures.

Independence Day of Bangladesh

The Independence Day of Bangladesh is celebrated every year on March 26. It is the national holiday of Bangladesh that commemorates the country's independence from Pakistan in 1971. On the morning of March 26, 1971, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman declared Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan, which were known at the time as East Pakistan and West Pakistan, respectively. The day is characterized by parades, speeches, fairs, and ceremonial events to commemorate that historic day in 1971.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Isha Ambani gets GenNext Entrepreneur award at Forbes India Leadership Awards 2023

Isha Ambani, the chairperson of Reliance Industries' retail unit, Reliance Retail, has won the 'Gennext Entrepreneur' award at Forbes India Leadership Awards 2023 at the ceremony held on March 24.

Along with her, several other major industry leaders were also felicitated at the award ceremony. The other big names include CK Venkataraman, managing director of Titan Company, who was felicitated with the 'CEO of the Year' award and Abhay Soi, chairman and managing director of Max Healthcare, who was awarded the 'Entrepreneur of the Year' award.