

Weekly Current Affairs PDF September 17 to September 23, 2023

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INTERNATIONAL

China and Syria announce 'strategic partnership' after its leaders met in Beijing

- In a significant diplomatic development, China and Syria have formally announced the establishment of a strategic partnership. This announcement came during a meeting between Chinese leader Xi Jinping and Syrian President Bashar Assad in Hangzhou, China, as the city prepared to host the Asian Games.
- Amid the backdrop of an unstable international environment, Xi Jinping emphasized China's commitment to supporting Syria and vice versa. The leaders pledged to strengthen their cooperation, not only to bolster their own interests but also to uphold international fairness and justice. This move aligns with China's strategy to position itself as a counterbalance to the U.S.-led international order.

ISRAEL UNVEILS CUTTING-EDGE BATTLE TANK, SHOWCASING TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS IN ARMORED WARFARE

- Israel unveiled its cutting-edge main battle tank, the Merkava Mark 5, known as "Barak," signifying a significant leap in technological advancement and military capability. The development of the Barak tank involved collaboration between the Israeli Defense Ministry's Armored Vehicles Directorate, the IDF's Ground Forces, Armored Corps, and multiple Israeli defense companies, including Elbit Systems, Rafael, and the Israel Aerospace Industries' subsidiary, Elta.
- The Barak tank represents a remarkable achievement in the field of armored warfare, showcasing Israel's commitment to advancing its defense capabilities. This 5th-generation tank builds upon the legacy of earlier Merkava models, incorporating cutting-edge technologies and innovations.
- The Barak tank is equipped with a network of sensors designed for target detection. This sensor data can be seamlessly shared with other military units, facilitating improved enemy detection and coordination on the battlefield.

Asian Games News: Hectic day for team India as teams prepare to participate in hockey, tennis, shooting, boxing

- The I2U2 group comprising India, Israel, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the United States has unveiled an ambitious joint space venture. This collaborative initiative aims to create a groundbreaking space-based tool with wide-ranging applications for policymakers, institutions, and entrepreneurs.
- The announcement follows India's recent successful lunar mission, marking a significant milestone for the quartet's space exploration efforts. Against the backdrop of India's triumphant lunar soft-landing, the I2U2 group, consisting of four nations deeply engaged in space exploration, has come together to pioneer a unique space-based tool.

NATIONAL

'Judiciary Has Been Protector Of India's Justice System': PM Modi At 'International Lawyers' Conference

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 'International Lawyers' Conference 2023' at New Delhi's Vigyan Bhawan today. This conference, organized by the Bar Council of India, has brought together legal experts from across the globe to deliberate on the theme 'Emerging Challenges in Justice Delivery System.'
- The event, scheduled for September 23 and 24, marks the first of its kind in India and aims to facilitate discussions on pressing legal issues of both national and international significance. The primary objective of the International Lawyers' Conference 2023 is to serve as a platform for meaningful dialogue and discussion on various legal topics.
- The conference is designed to foster the exchange of ideas and experiences among legal professionals and strengthen international cooperation while enhancing the understanding of legal issues. Throughout the two-day event, experts and participants will delve into a wide range of topics that are shaping the legal landscape.

PM Modi flags off 9 new Vande Bharat trains

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is all set to flag off nine Vande Bharat Express trains on Sunday, September 24th, according to ministry officials.
- Among these nine trains, the Indian Railways is launching two trains for West Bengal's Howrah and Tamil Nadu's Chennai, with one each for Kerala, Odisha, Telangana, Gujarat, and the poll-bound state of Rajasthan. These semi-high-speed trains are configured with eight coaches and are expected to offer a significant boost to the country's rail connectivity.

The nine new routes that will be inaugurated on Sunday are as follows:

SNo	Origin	Destination
1	Ranchi	Howrah
2	Patna	Howrah
3	Vijayawada	Chennai
4	Tirunelveli	Chennai
5	Rourkela	Puri
6	Udaipur	Jaipur
7	Kasaragod	Thiruvananthapuram
8	Jamnagar	Ahmedabad
9	Hyderabad	Bengaluru

Biswanath Ghat in Assam selected as Best Tourism Village of India 2023

- The Ministry of Tourism has declared Biswanath Ghat in Assam as the Best Tourism Village of India for the year 2023. This recognition comes after an extensive selection process that involved reviewing 791 applications from 31 different states and union territories across the country. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma expressed his delight at this achievement, highlighting the immense efforts made by the government to promote rural tourism in the state.
- Biswanath Ghat, situated to the south of Biswanath Chariali Town, is famously referred to as 'Gupta Kashi.' This name is derived from the ancient Biswanath temple in the town and draws a

parallel with Kashi during the illustrious Gupta Empire era. This picturesque ghat is adorned with a collection of temples dedicated to various deities. Notably, a Shiva temple graces the confluence of the Bridhaganga (Burigonga) River with the Brahmaputra.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

India's Defence Acquisition Council gave the green light to several capital acquisition proposals

- India's Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) has given the green light to several capital acquisition proposals, including the indigenous Dhruvastra short-range air-to-surface missile.
- This precision-guided weapon is designed for deployment on the indigenously built DHRUV MK-IV helicopters and is poised to elevate India's combat capabilities against enemy tanks and armored vehicles significantly.
- The Dhruvastra missile is a third-generation, fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) system, renowned for its versatility in engaging and neutralizing enemy tanks and armored vehicles. With a range spanning from 500 meters to an impressive 7 kilometers, Dhruvastra can engage targets across a wide spectrum. This extensive reach ensures that enemy tanks and armored vehicles are within its striking distance.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

With entry into JP Morgan bond indices, India is playing in the world

- JP Morgan Chase & Co. is set to include Indian government bonds in its renowned benchmark emerging-market index. This long-anticipated move is expected to attract substantial foreign investments into India's debt market.
- The inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Government Bond Index-Emerging Markets is scheduled to take effect from June 28, 2024. India will have a maximum weight of 10% on this index, as outlined in a statement.
- JPMorgan's decision to include Indian government bonds in its index is attributed to India's introduction of the FAR (Fully Accessible Route) program in 2020 and its substantial market reforms aimed at facilitating foreign portfolio investments. A survey conducted among benchmark investors revealed that nearly three-quarters of respondents supported India's inclusion in the index.

Axis Bank launches 'NEO for Business', a mobile-first Business Banking proposition for MSMEs

- In a strategic move to cater to the evolving needs of Indian Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), Axis Bank has recently unveiled its groundbreaking Transaction Banking platform, 'NEO for Business.' This innovative digital offering is designed to comprehensively address the real-time requirements of MSMEs, marking a significant milestone in the landscape of business banking in India.
- "NEO for Business" is built to create a distinctive first Transaction Banking platform for MSMEs. It has a contemporary UI/UX along with bank-grade security features. NEO for Business, will transform the Transaction Banking landscape for MSMEs by creating a strong digital ecosystem to solve all the evolving needs of MSMEs.

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INTERNATIONAL

Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso establish Sahel security alliance

- Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger have come together to address the pressing issue of jihadism in the Liptako-Gourma region by signing a mutual defense pact known as the Alliance of Sahel States (AES). This landmark agreement aims to establish a framework for collective defense and mutual assistance among these nations to protect their populations from the growing threat of terrorism. Here, we delve into the key aspects of this development.
- The heart of this historic pact is the Liptako-Gourma Charter, which was officially signed by the military leaders of the three Sahel countries. The charter, posted on social media by Mali's junta leader Assimi Goita, outlines the core objectives of the Alliance of Sahel States.
- The primary goal of the AES is to create a system of collective defense and mutual assistance among Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. This collaboration is essential to tackle the escalating threat of terrorism that has plagued the Liptako-Gourma region for years.

Singapore is now the world's freest economy, displacing Hong Kong after 53 years

- In a significant shift, Singapore has surpassed Hong Kong to claim the title of the world's freest economy, marking the end of Hong Kong's 53-year reign at the top. This shift is according to a report released by the Canadian think tank Fraser Institute. The Economic Freedom of the World Index, which has been tracking economic freedom since 1970, placed Hong Kong in second place for the first time.
- The index assesses economic freedom based on various factors, including the ease of international trade. Singapore's strong position in global trade contributed to its rise.
- Another key metric is the freedom to enter and compete in markets. Singapore's business-friendly policies have made it an attractive destination for entrepreneurs and investors.

Incurable dog disease Brucella canis infects humans in UK

- Since the summer of 2020, the United Kingdom has witnessed a concerning surge in cases of Brucella canis infection among dogs, originating primarily from Eastern Europe. This incurable disease, which has been spreading among canines, has now made the alarming leap to infect humans, with three British citizens falling victim to its debilitating effects. This article explores the nature of Brucella canis, its transmission, symptoms, and preventive measures.
- Brucella canis, a bacterium causing canine brucellosis, is the culprit behind this growing health concern. This highly contagious pathogen primarily targets dogs but can transmit to humans through direct contact with infected dogs.

NATIONAL

Assam government to launch scheme to give Rs 2 lakh each to two lakh youth

- The Assam government is set to usher in a new era of empowerment and self-reliance for its youth with the launch of the “Mukhyamantrir Atmanirbharshil Asom Abhiyan.” This ambitious scheme aims to provide financial assistance of Rs 2 lakh each to two lakh deserving young individuals, paving the way for a brighter and more self-sufficient future for the state’s youth.
- The “Mukhyamantrir Atmanirbharshil Asom Abhiyan” stands as a testament to the Assam government’s commitment to empowering its youth. By offering financial support to two lakh young individuals, the scheme intends to enable them to pursue their dreams and aspirations, thereby reducing unemployment and boosting self-reliance among the state’s youth.
- Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, known for his forward-thinking approach, spearheads this transformative initiative. In a bid to ensure the success of the scheme, he recently conducted a video conference with the Chief Secretary and senior officials from the conference hall of Assam House to discuss various crucial facets of the scheme, such as eligibility criteria, application procedures, and the disbursement of financial assistance.

SPORTS

Harmanpreet, Lovlina Borgohain to be flag bearer at Asian Games 2023

- The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has decided to have not one, but two flag-bearers to lead the Indian contingent at the opening ceremony of the upcoming Asian Games 2023 in Hangzhou, China. This decision comes as a significant departure from tradition and has generated considerable excitement among sports enthusiasts across the nation.
- The distinguished honor of flag-bearer at the opening ceremony of the Asian Games 2023 has been bestowed upon two exceptional athletes: Harmanpreet Singh and Lovlina Borgohain. Harmanpreet Singh, the captain of the Indian Hockey team, and Lovlina Borgohain, an Olympic medallist boxer, have been selected to jointly lead the Indian contingent at this grand sporting event, scheduled to commence on September 23 in Hangzhou.
- The Asian Games 2023 will see a record-breaking Indian contingent with a total of 655 athletes representing the nation. This marks the largest Indian contingent ever to participate in the Asian Games, reflecting the country’s growing prominence in the field of sports.

Antim Panghal wins world bronze and quota for Paris Olympics

- Antim Panghal has become the first Indian wrestler to bag a quota place for the Paris Olympics. On her senior World Championships debut, Indian wrestler Antim Panghal clinched a bronze medal and confirmed a 2024 Paris Olympic quota, registering a dominant win over European champion Jonna Malmgren of Sweden in 53 kg category bout, on Thursday.

- The two-time U20 world champion was at her absolute best as she secured a 16-6 win via technical superiority (TSU) to pocket her maiden senior World Championships medal.
- Enroute to her bronze medal victory, Panghal beat reigning world champion Olivia Dominique Parrish of US in her opening match , followed by her TSU win over Roksana Marta Zasina of Poland.
- The 19-year-old girl from Haryana, who is competing as a neutral athlete after WFI got suspended by the World body, then defeated Natalia Malysheva of Russia in the quarterfinal before suffering a heartbreaking loss to Tokyo Olympic bronze medallist Vanesa Kaladzinskaya of Belarus in semifinal on Wednesday.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Rose Day 2023: 22nd September

- World Rose Day, also known as The Welfare of Cancer Patients Day, is an annual observance held on September 22nd. It is a day dedicated to honoring and supporting individuals worldwide who are courageously battling cancer. This poignant day serves as a reminder of the resilience of cancer patients and aims to spread awareness about the challenges they face while inspiring them to maintain a positive outlook on their journey toward recovery.
- World Rose Day finds its roots in the touching story of Melinda Rose, a 12-year-old Canadian cancer patient.
- Melinda was diagnosed with Askin's Tumor, one of the rarest blood cancers, in 1994. Her prognosis was bleak, with doctors predicting just a few weeks of life.
- Despite the grim prognosis, Melinda defied expectations and lived for six more months, spreading joy and hope among fellow cancer patients.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

China, U.S. and India absent at U.N.'s Climate Ambition Summit

- The Climate Ambition Summit (CAS) at the United Nations General Assembly on September 21 highlighted the absence of major economies crucial in shaping global emissions reduction efforts. China, the United States, and India, collectively responsible for 42% of global greenhouse gas emissions, were notably missing from this critical event. The CAS aimed to showcase leaders with credible actions and policies to uphold the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C degree goal and promote climate justice.
- Leading up to the summit, around 100 heads of state responded to Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' call for increased climate action. However, only representatives from 34 states and 7 institutions were given speaking slots at the summit. Surprisingly, India's neighbors, such as Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Pakistan, were among the speakers, along with emerging economies like South Africa and Brazil. Meanwhile, the European Union, Germany, France, and Canada also had a presence.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

National Medical Commission Achieves Prestigious WFME

- The National Medical Commission (NMC) of India has achieved a remarkable milestone by receiving a prestigious 10-year Recognition Status from the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME). This recognition signifies a significant achievement for NMC and India's medical education sector, highlighting their commitment to maintaining the highest standards of medical education and accreditation.
- The WFME recognition is a testament to the fact that Indian medical colleges have successfully met international standards in medical education. This recognition not only reflects positively on the quality of medical education in India but also aligns it with global benchmarks. This alignment has the potential to enhance the credibility and reputation of Indian medical institutions on the world stage.
- One of the most notable benefits of this recognition is the increased access it provides to Indian medical graduates seeking postgraduate training and medical practice abroad. Many countries, including the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, require WFME recognition for foreign medical qualifications. As a result, Indian medical professionals can now explore international opportunities more readily, furthering their careers and experiences.

Indian-origin author Chetna Maroo's debut novel shortlisted for Booker Prize 2023

- The Booker Prize 2023 judging panel has unveiled the final list of six novels, carefully curated from the "Booker dozen" longlist of 13 titles. These novels were selected from a pool of 163 books, published between October of the previous year and September of the current year. The announcement of the prize is scheduled for November 26th.
- London-based Indian-origin author Chetna Maroo's debut novel, 'Western Lane,' has earned a well-deserved place on the prestigious Booker Prize shortlist. The novel tells the poignant story of an 11-year-old British Gujarati girl named Gopi and her profound bonds with her family. At its core, 'Western Lane' explores the challenges faced by an immigrant father who endeavors to raise his family as a single parent. What sets this novel apart is its unique use of the sport of squash as a metaphor for complex human emotions, a choice celebrated by the Booker judges.

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INTERNATIONAL

UK PM Rishi Sunak delays petrol, diesel car ban in net zero reset

- In a recent announcement, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has unveiled a shift in the UK's strategy for achieving its Net Zero climate action targets. This strategy

includes a significant delay of five years in implementing the proposed ban on petrol and diesel cars, pushing the deadline to 2035.

- Despite this delay, Sunak emphasized that the UK remains steadfast in its commitment to reduce carbon emissions and achieve its Net Zero target by 2050. The core objective is unchanged, but the approach is evolving to be more practical, proportionate, and realistic, particularly in light of the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.
- Net Zero, in the context of climate action, refers to the global imperative that the reduction of harmful greenhouse gas emissions must be balanced by carbon dioxide removals within a specified timeframe.

Azerbaijan launched operation against Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh

- Azerbaijan's military operation in Nagorno-Karabakh has ignited concerns of a renewed conflict in the region. This long-standing dispute revolves around an ethnic Armenian region within Azerbaijani territory. The recent attacks have escalated tensions and raised international alarm.
- Azerbaijan has initiated a military operation backed by artillery strikes in Nagorno-Karabakh.
- They have declared their intent to continue until Armenian forces surrender.
- The operation was triggered by landmine incidents, attributed to Armenian saboteurs, resulting in casualties.
- Nagorno-Karabakh, an ethnically Armenian region, is internationally recognized as Azerbaijani territory.
- Separatist Armenian authorities control part of the region, considering it their ancestral homeland.
- The conflict has been a persistent flashpoint since the Soviet Union's dissolution.

NATIONAL

Government approves Rs 480 crore three-year education scheme for medical devices sector

- The Indian government has taken a significant step towards strengthening the country's medical devices industry by approving a ₹480 crore scheme aimed at developing a skilled talent pool. This three-year initiative is poised to provide essential financial support to government institutions for the implementation of various courses related to medical devices, with the goal of upgrading these institutions to global standards.
- The scheme's approval follows the recent introduction of the National Medical Device Policy, 2023, which envisions the growth of India's medical devices sector from its current \$11 billion to an impressive \$50 billion by the year 2030.
- One of the primary objectives of this scheme is to ensure a steady supply of skilled professionals across the medical device sector. To achieve this, the Department of Pharmaceuticals is poised to leverage the available resources within the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship. This strategic move aims to facilitate skilling, reskilling, and upskilling of individuals within the medical sector, catering to the evolving needs of the industry.

After ICMR nod, Kerala to conduct tests to detect Nipah virus

- The Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) has granted approval for the use of the Truenat test to diagnose Nipah virus (NiV) in Kerala. This development is significant as hospitals equipped with Biosafety Level 2 (BSL 2) laboratories can now conduct the test. The Health Minister, Veena George, has announced that a standard operating procedure (SOP) will be formulated for conducting the Truenat test.
- With the ICMR's approval, more laboratories in the state of Kerala will have the capacity to perform NiV diagnostics using the Truenat test. Samples testing positive for NiV through the Truenat method can be further analyzed at designated facilities such as Kozhikode or Thiruvananthapuram Medical College Hospitals or the Institute of Advanced Virology in the capital.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Alzheimer's Day 2023: 21st September

- World Alzheimer's Day, observed on September 21 every year, is a global initiative aimed at increasing awareness about Alzheimer's disease and reducing the stigma associated with it and other forms of dementia. Alzheimer's disease, the most prevalent type of dementia, accounts for 60-70% of dementia cases. It is a progressive brain disorder that affects memory, cognitive function, and behavior, gradually impacting an individual's daily life. This article delves into the significance of World Alzheimer's Day 2023, its theme, and essential information about Alzheimer's disease.
- In 2023, the theme for Alzheimer's Day is 'Never Too Early, Never Too Late.' This theme emphasises the crucial importance of identifying risk factors and taking proactive steps to reduce those risks.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

'Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar': Government Comes Out With New Set Of National Awards

- The Government of India has recently introduced a prestigious set of National Awards in the field of Science, Technology, and Innovation, known as the "Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar" (RVP). These awards serve a vital role in recognizing and honoring the exceptional contributions made by scientists, technologists, and innovators who have significantly impacted various domains of science, technology, and technology-led innovation.
- The primary objective of the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar is to acknowledge and celebrate the remarkable work accomplished by individuals or teams in the realm of science, technology, and innovation. This initiative aims to inspire and motivate scientists, technologists, and innovators to continue their pursuit of excellence, driving progress and innovation in India.
- The Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar stands as one of the highest honors within the scientific and technological community in India. It encompasses individuals from diverse backgrounds, including those working in government, private sector organizations, or as independent contributors to the scientific and technological landscape. The awards recognize path-breaking research, innovative discoveries, and technological advancements that have made a significant impact on society.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Volvo To End Production Of Diesel Cars and SUVs By Early 2024

- Volvo Cars, a prominent name in the automotive industry, has recently made a groundbreaking announcement. The Swedish car manufacturer has declared its intention to cease the production of diesel-powered vehicles by early 2024, marking a significant step toward its goal of becoming an all-electric carmaker. This decision aligns with Volvo's commitment to transitioning fully to electric vehicles by 2030.
- Volvo's bold move to discontinue diesel vehicle production is a proactive response to the evolving landscape of the automotive industry. According to the company's official statement, the last diesel-powered Volvo car will roll off the assembly line in just a few months. This decisive action places Volvo among the pioneers in the automotive world, as one of the first legacy car manufacturers to completely eliminate diesel from its lineup.
- Volvo's decision to phase out diesel is part of a broader vision aimed at transforming the company into a fully electric carmaker. This vision entails an ambitious goal to have all Volvo cars be electric by the end of this decade, specifically by 2030. By taking this bold step, Volvo is sending a clear message about its commitment to sustainability, environmental responsibility, and staying at the forefront of automotive innovation.

Ind-Ra raises GDP growth forecast for FY24 to 6.2%

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and India Ratings and Research have released contrasting forecasts for India's economic growth in the fiscal year 2024 (FY24). While ADB has lowered its projection to 6.3%, India Ratings has raised it to 6.2%. Here's a breakdown of their assessments and key factors influencing these predictions:
- Monsoon Patterns Impact: ADB cites erratic monsoon patterns as a primary reason for revising India's growth forecast down by 10 basis points to 6.3% for FY24. These patterns are expected to affect agricultural output.
- Inflation Concerns: ADB also revised its inflation projection for India in FY24 to 5.5%, up from the previous 5%. Adverse weather conditions have led to food inflation, contributing to South Asia's overall inflation rate. The continuation of the rice export ban could further escalate food price inflation.

Regular jobs increased, but unemployment still a concern

- In a recent report titled "State of Working India 2023: Social Identities and Labour Market Outcomes," a group of economists and researchers from Azim Premji University shed light on the employment landscape in India. This report highlights the dynamics of job creation, the prevalence of regular wage jobs, caste-based segregation, gender-based earnings disparities, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on unemployment rates. Let's delve into the key findings of the report.

1. Growth in Regular Jobs
2. Diminished Pace Since 2019
3. Limited Social Security

4. Gender Disparities
5. Reduction in Caste-based Segregation
6. Earnings Disparities
7. Post-COVID Unemployment

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INTERNATIONAL

ASEAN Kicks Off Its First-Ever Joint Military Drills in Indonesia

- Units from the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) recently embarked on their inaugural joint military exercises in Indonesia's South Natuna Sea. These drills come at a time of escalating geopolitical tensions between major global powers and rising concerns over China's activities in the South China Sea.
- The five-day military operation, taking place in the South Natuna Sea, primarily focuses on enhancing military skills. These skills encompass areas such as maritime security, patrols, and the distribution of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. According to the Indonesian military, this exercise aims to promote regional stability and cooperation among ASEAN members.
- All ten member nations of ASEAN, including prospective member East Timor, are participating in these joint military drills. The decision to hold this collaborative exercise underscores the commitment of ASEAN countries to maintain regional stability and enhance their collective security. It also sends a strong signal of unity among member states in the face of rising geopolitical tensions.

African Union plans to launch its own credit ratings agency

- The African Union is set to launch its own credit ratings agency in the coming year as a direct response to concerns regarding what it perceives as biased credit assessments given to African nations. This move aims to provide a more balanced evaluation of lending risks associated with African countries and bolster investment in the continent.
- The African credit rating agency will primarily function within the African continent and will be financially self-sustaining. Its core objective is to offer a supplementary perspective for investors when making decisions regarding African bonds or extending private loans to African nations, according to the African Union.
- The African Union, along with its member nations' leaders, has long criticized the "big three" credit ratings agencies—Moody's, Fitch, and S&P Global Ratings—for what they perceive as unfair assessments of lending risks related to African countries. They argue that these agencies are often too quick to downgrade African nations, particularly during crises such as the global health pandemic.

G77+China Conference Concludes with Stress on Empowering Global South

- The two-day Summit of the G77+China recently concluded, marking a significant moment for the Global South's aspirations in the international governance system.

This summit brought together delegations from over 100 nations, including more than 30 heads of state and government.

- The Group of 77 (G77), established in 1964, consists of over 130 member nations, with its leadership rotating among member nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Notably, G77 member countries collectively represent over 80 percent of the world's population and comprise more than two-thirds of UN member nations. China, while not a member of the G77, has been actively cooperating and supporting the group's objectives within the framework of "G77+China."
- At the summit's opening, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres affirmed the enduring importance of the Group of 77+China within the United Nations system. This acknowledgment underscores the group's influential role in global affairs.

Gandhi Walk in Johannesburg revived after COVID-19 hiatus

- The 35th edition of the annual Gandhi Walk, a cherished event in the predominantly Indian suburb of Lenasia in Johannesburg, finally returned after being postponed for three long years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of over two thousand people who embraced the new format—a delightful six-kilometre walk, accompanied by an array of entertainment. This year's walk was a departure from the traditional format, emphasizing enjoyment over competition.
- In 2020, barely a month before the scheduled event, as the pandemic began its relentless global spread, the Gandhi Walk Committee made a tough but wise decision to postpone the event indefinitely. This choice was made despite the Committee having already incurred significant costs in planning for an expected 4,000 registered walkers. The traditional format had catered to various fitness levels and interests, offering two distances—15km for serious athletes and 5km for families, senior citizens, and parents pushing prams.

NATIONAL

Women's Reservation Bill Approved In PM Modi-Led Union Cabinet Meeting Amid Special Session

- On September 18, the Union Cabinet took a historic step by approving the Women Reservation Bill, which mandates a 33 percent reservation for women in both the Lok Sabha and state assemblies of India. This monumental legislation aims to ensure equal representation for women in the highest legislative bodies of the country.
- The Women Reservation Bill mandates that one-third of the seats in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies will be reserved for women candidates.
- This provision aims to promote gender equality and increase women's representation in India's legislative bodies.
- The Bill also proposes sub-reservation within the 33 percent quota for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Anglo-Indians.
- This sub-reservation recognizes the importance of addressing intersectional inequalities and promoting diversity in political representation.

SPORTS

Deepak Chahar launches his sports brand 'Dnine'

- Cricketer Deepak Chahar, known for his stellar performances on the cricket field, has ventured into the world of sports equipment with the launch of DNINE Sports. With an investment of ₹2.5 crore, this sports line promises to revolutionize athletic gear, offering a wide range of products catering to the needs of athletes, including professional cricketers. In this article, we explore the inception, products, and vision of DNINE Sports.
- This section delves into the origins of DNINE Sports, highlighting Deepak Chahar's entrepreneurial journey and the decision to bootstrap the venture. It also provides insight into the company's incorporation under the entity LCDC Athletics Private Limited, with Deepak Chahar and his father, Lokendra Singh Chahar, as co-founders.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

RBI extends tenure of HDFC Bank MD Sashidhar Jagdishan by 3 years

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently given its stamp of approval for the reappointment of Sashidhar Jagdishan as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of HDFC Bank. This tenure extension will see Jagdishan at the helm of the bank for an additional three years, extending his leadership until October 26, 2026. This regulatory decision comes as a significant endorsement of his leadership and strategic vision for one of India's largest and most influential banking institutions.
- Sashidhar Jagdishan's journey within HDFC Bank is nothing short of remarkable. He joined the bank back in 1996 as a manager within the finance function. Over the years, his dedication and commitment propelled him through the ranks. By 1999, he had become the Business Head of Finance, a role that showcased his financial acumen and leadership potential. In 2008, Jagdishan assumed the position of Chief Financial Officer (CFO), a role he excelled in, laying the foundation for his eventual ascent to the top of the organization.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

IREDA & Bank of Maharashtra Sign A Contract To Make Funding For Renewable Energy Projects

- The Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) has joined forces with Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) under the administrative control of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in the field of renewable energy sector.
- The central objective of this collaboration is to promote and facilitate co-lending and loan syndication for a diverse spectrum of renewable energy projects across India. This initiative aligns with India's ambitious goals of reducing carbon emissions and transitioning to clean and sustainable energy sources.
- The MoU was formally inked by Bharat Singh Rajput, General Manager (Technical Services) at IREDA, and Rajesh Singh, General Manager (Retail & MSME Credit) at

Bank of Maharashtra. The signing ceremony took place at IREDA's Business Centre in New Delhi, marking a crucial milestone in the partnership.

14th World Spice Congress to promote international trade of Indian spices

- The 14th edition of the World Spice Congress (WSC) commenced in Vashi, Navi Mumbai. This three-day event is being meticulously organized by the Spices Board India, a subsidiary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in collaboration with several trade bodies and export forums. India, often referred to as the 'Spice Bowl' of the world, is known for producing high-quality, rare, and medicinal spices. The World Spice Congress (WSC) aims to create new opportunities for the international trade of Indian spices.
- The event is not limited to traders; it also welcomes policy regulators. Special business sessions have been dedicated to promoting spice trade among G20 countries. Participants include policymakers, regulatory authorities, spice trade associations, government officials, and technical experts from key G20 nations.
- Maharashtra was chosen as the venue for WSC due to its significant spice production. The state is a leading producer of turmeric and boasts two GI-tagged turmeric varieties and one GI-tagged chilli variety. Additionally, coastal areas of Maharashtra are known for producing GI-tagged Kokum. The state serves as one of India's largest exporting hubs for spices.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Upward revision: OECD raises India's FY24 GDP growth projection to 6.3%

- The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has revised its GDP growth projection for India in the fiscal year 2024, forecasting a growth rate of 6.3%. This upward revision represents a notable increase from the previous estimate of 6%. The OECD attributes India's positive growth surprises to favorable agricultural outcomes driven by favorable weather conditions.
- While India sees an improved growth outlook, the global economy is projected to grow at a rate of 3% in 2023 and is expected to slow down further to 2.7% in 2024, as indicated in the OECD report. Despite a weaker-than-expected recovery in China, the report highlights that a significant portion of global growth in 2023-24 is expected to originate from Asia.

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NATIONAL

New Delhi: Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurates 'Udaan Bhawan' an integrated office complex at Safdarjung Airport

- Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia inaugurated 'Udaan Bhawan,' a state-of-the-art integrated office complex nestled within the confines of Delhi's Safdarjung Airport. Udaan Bhawan promises to play a pivotal role in facilitating enhanced coordination and efficiency among various regulatory authorities operating under the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA).

- The newly inaugurated Udaan Bhawan is poised to become the nerve center of aviation oversight in India. This modern facility will house several key regulatory bodies, including the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA), and the Airports Authority of India (AAI). By co-locating these vital entities, Udaan Bhawan aims to foster seamless collaboration and streamline administrative processes within the civil aviation sector.

INDIAN COAST GUARD SUCCESSFULLY CONDUCTS 'OPERATION SAJAG' A COASTAL SECURITY DRILL

- 'Operation Sajag,' a comprehensive drill was conducted by the Indian Coast Guard along the west coast on September 18, 2023. It is a significant event in the realm of coastal security. This operation involves all stakeholders in the coastal security construct and plays a pivotal role in revalidating the coastal security mechanism while enhancing awareness among fishermen operating at sea.
- During 'Operation Sajag,' an extensive checking and verification process was initiated, targeting the documents and crew passes of all fishing boats, barges, and crafts at sea. The sheer scale of this operation is evident from the participation of 118 ships, including vessels from Customs, Marine Police, Ports, and the Indian Navy. This unified effort demonstrates the commitment of various agencies to ensure the safety and security of India's coastal regions.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

DIPA appoints Dhananjay Joshi as Chairman, Sandeep Girotra as Vice-Chairman

- Digital Infrastructure Providers Association (DIPA) has appointed Dhananjay Joshi, MD and CEO of Summit Digitel, as the chairman. Dhananjay Joshi takes over the baton from Akhil Gupta, Chairman of Bharti Enterprises, who served as Chairman of the industry body since 2011. DIPA named Sandeep Girotra, CEO of American Tower India, as the new vice chairman of the association.
- The changes in the leadership management will come into effect from October 1, 2023. The telecom industry body concluded its annual general body meeting for 2022-23, with the announcements of its leadership for the term 2023-24. Akhil Gupta has accepted the request of the executive committee members to hold the position of Patron Member, DIPA.
- The Digital Infrastructure Providers Association (DIPA) is a non-profit industry body that represents the digital infrastructure industry in India. It was founded in 2010 as the Tower and Infrastructure Providers Association (TIPA), but was renamed DIPA in 2020 to reflect the broader scope of its membership.

PIO named CEO of Penguin Random House

- Nihar Malaviya has been named as permanent CEO of Penguin Random House, nine months after he was appointed the interim chief executive. Malaviya succeeded Markus Dohle, who departed weeks after a federal judge struck down Penguin Random House's attempted merger with Simon & Schuster, a deal Dohle had pushed for. Penguin Random House, the world's largest trade publisher, has been

undergoing a company-wide reorganization in 2023, with numerous senior editors either laid off or departing under a voluntary retirement plan.

- Bertelsmann, the German media conglomerate, has owned Random House since 1998. Random House and Penguin merged in 2013.
- Malaviya, 48, joined Bertelsmann in 2001, and had served in a variety of positions before becoming CEO. He was most recently COO and president of Penguin Random House in the U.S.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

SHREYAS National Fellowship Scheme benefits more than 21,000 SC students for Higher Education

- The Scheme for Higher Education Youth in Apprenticeship and Skills (SHREYAS scheme), comprising four central sector sub-schemes, has been instrumental in empowering thousands of students from Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) since its inception in 2014. This umbrella scheme encompasses "Top Class Education for SCs," "Free Coaching Scheme for SCs and OBCs," "National Overseas Scheme for SCs," and "National Fellowship for SCs." This article provides an overview of these sub-schemes, highlighting the allocated budgets, expenditure details, and the number of beneficiaries over the past nine years.
- The scheme aims to offer high-quality coaching to economically disadvantaged SC and OBC candidates, enabling them to participate in competitive exams and gain admission to prestigious technical and professional higher education institutions.
- Families with a total annual income of up to 8 lakhs are eligible for this scheme.
- 3500 slots are allocated annually, with a student ratio of 70% SC and 30% OBC. Additionally, 30% of slots are reserved for female candidates.
- From 2014-15 to 2022-23, a total of 109.77 crore rupees have been disbursed, benefiting 19,995 beneficiaries.

Indian Navy to showcase promising technologies during 'Swavlamban-2023'

- The Indian Navy is all set to host the second edition of the Naval Innovation and Indigenisation (NIIO) Seminar, known as 'Swavlamban 2023,' scheduled to take place on 4th and 5th October 2023. This event follows the maiden edition of the seminar, which was held in July 2022 and marked a significant milestone in the Navy's quest for innovation and self-reliance.
- In the inaugural edition of 'Swavlamban' in 2022, the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India unveiled the 'SPRINT' initiative, which has since become a driving force behind the Indian Navy's pursuit of indigenous technology adoption. 'SPRINT' stands for Supporting Pole-Vaulting in R&D through Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX), NIIO, and Technology Development Acceleration Cell (TDAC). This collaborative effort aims to foster innovation and indigenisation in the defense sector.
- A key highlight of the 'SPRINT' initiative is the issuance of 75 challenges to start-ups and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). These challenges serve as a clarion call to harness indigenous innovation for the benefit of the Indian Navy. The overarching goal is to develop at least 75 cutting-edge technologies and products as

part of the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav,' a celebration of India's 75 years of independence.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

S&P Global revises India's FY24 growth forecast upwards to 6.6%; turns pessimistic on inflation

- S&P Global Market Intelligence has reevaluated India's economic growth prospects for the fiscal year 2024 (FY24). This upward revision is attributed to robust economic performance in the April-June quarter. Notably, the revised projection stands at 6.6%, a significant improvement from the 5.9% estimate put forth by the analytics firm in August.
- While the revised growth forecast is promising, S&P Global Market Intelligence also presents a concerning prediction regarding inflation. The analytics firm anticipates a sharp increase in inflation, with the rate surging to 6% in 2023. This projection marks a noteworthy climb from the 5.1% inflation rate estimated in August. Of particular note, this level of inflation is approaching the upper boundary of the Reserve Bank of India's target range.

SBI introduces digital opening of NRE/NRO account setup through YONO

- In a groundbreaking move, the State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender, has launched a cutting-edge digital platform for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to seamlessly open NRE (Non-Residential External) and NRO (Non-Resident Ordinary) savings and current accounts. This innovative service is specifically tailored to "new to bank" (NTB) customers, aiming to simplify and expedite the account opening procedure.
- NRE Account: A Non-Residential External (NRE) account is established in India under the NRI's name to house their foreign earnings securely.
- NRO Account: Conversely, a Non-Resident Ordinary (NRO) account is opened in India in the NRI's name to manage income earned within the country, such as rent, dividends, pensions, interest, and more.

SBI To Send Chocolates To Borrowers Likely To Default On Monthly Repayments

- The State Bank of India (SBI), the largest public sector lender, has devised a unique strategy to tackle potential loan defaults. Recognizing that borrowers planning to default often ignore reminder calls, SBI is taking a proactive approach by personally visiting their homes unannounced and surprising them with a pack of chocolates. This innovative method is aimed at improving loan collections, particularly as SBI's retail lending has experienced substantial growth.
- SBI's retail loan book has witnessed remarkable growth, surging by over 16.46 percent to reach Rs 12,04,279 crore in the June 2023 quarter from Rs 10,34,111 crore in the previous year.
- To enhance its loan recovery efforts, SBI has partnered with fintech companies that utilize artificial intelligence (AI) technology. These fintech platforms play a dual role: one focuses on negotiating with borrowers, while the other assesses a borrower's likelihood of default.

Govt approves welfare measures for LIC agents, employees

- In a significant development, the Finance Ministry has granted approval for a range of welfare measures aimed at benefiting both Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) agents and its employees. These measures, which have been approved today, are expected to bring substantial advantages to the vast LIC workforce comprising over 13 lakh agents and more than one lakh regular employees.
- One of the key highlights of these welfare measures is the enhancement of the gratuity limit for LIC agents. Previously set at three lakh rupees, this limit has now been raised to an improved five lakh rupees. This change is expected to provide a more substantial financial cushion for LIC agents.
- Another notable provision is the eligibility of reappointed agents to receive renewal commissions. This decision is expected to motivate agents to continue their association with LIC and further strengthen their commitment to the organization.

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NATIONAL

Assam Governor launches 'Sarpanch Samvad' app

- In a significant step towards empowering grassroots leaders, Assam Governor Gulab Chand Kataria unveiled the 'Sarpanch Samvad' app in a grand launch ceremony held at the Raj Bhavan. This groundbreaking initiative is set to revolutionize the way Sarpanchs, who are village headmen, communicate, collaborate, and access vital resources. The event witnessed the participation of more than 30 Sarpanchs from various corners of the country, signifying the app's importance in fostering community development.
- The 'Sarpanch Samvad' app has been meticulously developed by the Quality Council of India (QCI). QCI, as the apex organization responsible for establishing and operating the third-party national accreditation system, plays a vital role in improving quality across various sectors and advising the government and stakeholders on quality-related matters.
- At present, the application offers support for seven languages, including English, Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, and Telugu.

SPORTS

Maharashtra: Shinde govt issues notification on name change of Aurangabad, Osmanabad districts

- The Maharashtra government has issued an official notification regarding the renaming of Aurangabad and Osmanabad districts to Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar and Dharashiv, respectively. Following a period during which suggestions and objections were sought several months ago, the decision to change these names at various levels, including sub-division, village, taluka, and district, has been finalized. This notification has been issued by the Revenue Department of the state.

- The decision to rename 'Aurangabad' and 'Osmanabad' to 'Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar' and 'Dharashiv,' respectively, was initially made during the last cabinet meeting of the previous Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government. This decision, taken on June 29, 2022, was chaired by the then Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, just before he resigned from office following a rebellion led by Eknath Shinde.

Diamond League 2023 Final: Neeraj Chopra finishes second in javelin throw, Jakub Vadlejch takes the title

- Neeraj Chopra, India's star javelin thrower and the reigning World champion, displayed his skill and resolve at the Diamond League finals in Eugene. His best throw of 83.80 meters secured him the second position in this prestigious competition, where he engaged in a remarkable battle against formidable opponents.
- Neeraj Chopra had previously clinched the Diamond League crown in 2022, making a remarkable best attempt of 88.44 meters. His remarkable journey in the field of javelin throwing had already garnered attention worldwide, and he was poised to continue his impressive streak in the 2023 edition of the competition.
- Chopra experienced a setback during his first attempt when he faced a "no throw." On his second try, Chopra made a significant comeback, landing the javelin at an impressive distance of 83.80 meters. This throw put him back in contention and served as a testament to his resilience and skill.

Ferrari's Carlos Sainz won a thrilling Singapore Grand Prix

- Ferrari's Carlos Sainz won the Singapore Grand Prix to end Formula 1 leader Max Verstappen's record run of 10 wins in a row and shatter Red Bull's dream of going through the season unbeaten. McLaren's Lando Norris finished a close second and Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton took third place as Red Bull ended up off the podium for the first time since last November's Brazilian Grand Prix.
- The 2023 Formula 1 Singapore Grand Prix drew a more-than-expected 264,108 spectators over the race weekend. Last year, the event attracted a record 302,000 spectators, surpassing the 268,000 figure for the 2019 edition. The Singapore Grand Prix was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Bamboo Day 2023: 18th September

- World Bamboo Day, observed annually on September 18, is a global initiative that sheds light on the incredible significance of bamboo. This remarkable plant, often referred to as "green gold," holds immense potential in sustainable development, poverty alleviation, environmental conservation, and cultural preservation. World Bamboo Day serves as a platform to raise awareness about the myriad benefits of bamboo and its role in addressing pressing global challenges.
- Bamboo, a rapidly growing type of grass, is renowned for its exceptional qualities, including strength, flexibility, and eco-friendliness. This day celebrates the incredible versatility and sustainability of bamboo as a valuable resource.

- World Bamboo Day owes its existence to the dedicated efforts of the World Bamboo Organization (WBO), a non-profit organization established in 2005 by Susanne Lucas and David Knights. Their vision was to promote bamboo as a versatile and valuable resource with the potential to transform industries and livelihoods.

International Equal Pay Day 2023: 18th September

- International Equal Pay Day, celebrated on 18 September, is a significant global observance that highlights the ongoing struggle for equal pay for work of equal value. This day underscores the commitment of the United Nations to uphold human rights and combat all forms of discrimination, particularly discrimination against women and girls. One pressing issue it addresses is the gender pay gap, which continues to persist in various parts of the world.
- The gender pay gap is a stark representation of inequality. It quantifies the difference between the average earnings of men and women, typically expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. In 2023, women in the United States, for instance, earn an average of 82 cents for every dollar earned by men. This glaring gap means that women have to work more than 15 months to earn what men do in just 12 months.

SUMMITS AND MOU'S

India shares unique relationship with UNCITRAL 2023

- India recently played host to the inaugural United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) South Asia conference, held from September 14 to 16. This significant event was jointly organized by the Ministry of External Affairs, UNCITRAL, and the organization's national coordination committee for India.
- The conference saw the presence of notable dignitaries, including Minister of State for External Affairs, Rajkumar Ranjan Singh, Chief Justice of India, DY Chandrachud, and Attorney General R Venkataramani, among others.
- This three-day conference marked a continuation of a significant event held in New Delhi in 2016, which celebrated 50 years of UNCITRAL's existence.
- The primary goal of the conference was to foster closer ties between India and UNCITRAL while encouraging active interaction among UNCITRAL, the judiciary, the bureaucracy, academia, and the legal fraternity.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Fashion designer Rahul Mishra awarded Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres

- Rahul Mishra, the visionary Indian designer was honored with the Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) by the French government, joining a distinguished list of fellow countrymen and women including Ritu Kumar, Ritu Beri, Wendell Rodricks, and Manish Arora who have previously received this award.
- Rahul Mishra's journey through the world of fashion has been guided by a strong commitment to ethical and sustainable practices. His creations not only captivate the eye but also inspire change by highlighting the highest standards and craft of local artisans in India. Mishra's designs are an exquisite blend of traditional Indian

hand-woven textiles and intricate embroidery techniques, showcasing the country's rich heritage and culture. Through his work, he has become a staunch advocate for ethical and sustainable fashion, setting a remarkable example for the global fashion industry.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

Indian Bank rolls out 'IB SAATHI' to enhance banking services

- Indian Bank has introduced a new initiative called 'IB SAATHI' (Sustainable Access and Aligning Technology for Holistic Inclusion) to bolster its financial inclusion efforts. The primary goal of IB SAATHI is to provide essential banking services to various stakeholders through the business correspondent (BC) channel.
- Under this revamped model, Indian Bank is committed to offering basic banking services at all its centers for a minimum of four hours each day through fixed outlets. This initiative is a significant step towards ensuring widespread access to banking services.
- In addition to the fixed outlets, BC agents will also extend their services directly to the doorstep of customers. This move aims to make financial services more accessible, convenient, and inclusive, especially for those in remote or underserved areas.

Digital rupee in circulation at Rs 16.39 cr in 2022-23 shows RBI data

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has disclosed that as of March 2023, the circulation of the E-rupee, India's Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), has reached ₹16.39 crore. This digital currency, which mirrors the country's physical legal tender, comes in different denominations and serves both wholesale and retail purposes.
Total E-rupee circulation: ₹16.39 crore.
Wholesale CBDC (e₹-W): ₹10.69 crore.
Retail CBDC (e₹-R): ₹5.70 crore.
The highest circulation is in ₹500 CBDC notes, amounting to ₹2.71 crore.
₹200 notes follow with a circulation of 1.16%.
Denominations range from 50 paise to ₹100.
Circulation for these denominations falls between 0.01% to 0.83%.

Sidbi to raise Rs.10000 crore from rights issue next fiscal

- Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), a key player in SME loan refinancing, has unveiled plans to raise Rs.10,000 crore through a rights issue in the upcoming fiscal year. This strategic move is aimed at bolstering its equity capital as the institution anticipates an expansion of its assets, targeting Rs.5 lakh crore by March 2024 from its current standing at approximately Rs.4 lakh crore as of March 2023.
- SIDBI's growth outlook is primarily driven by the surging demand for direct financing, a segment that has grown significantly over the past two years, now constituting 14% of its loan portfolio compared to a mere 7% previously.
- The ownership landscape of SIDBI includes the central government with a 20.8% stake, the State Bank of India holding 15.65%, and Life Insurance Corporation at

13.33%. The remaining equity is distributed among various public financial institutions and banks. It is expected that these stakeholders will subscribe to the proposed rights issue.

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NATIONAL

Dharmendra Pradhan , Om Birla launch skills on wheels

- To promote digital literacy and digital skills in which India is developing global competency this scheme with the help of NSDC has been launched. 'Skills on Wheels is a unique experiment. Today, PM Vishwakarma's Yojana was launched, which shows that the Indian govt is committed to providing skills to traditional craftsmen, along with providing 21st-century digitisation skills," Dharmendra Pradhan said while speaking to reporters.
- This bus and experimental laboratory will go to the villages of Rajasthan. Later it will go to other parts of the country. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla is present here. He will send this bus to Rajasthan. Later it will go to other parts of the country," he added.

Santiniketan finds a place on UNESCO's World Heritage list

- Santiniketan, the cultural and educational hub founded by Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, has earned a coveted spot on UNESCO's World Heritage List. This recognition marks a significant milestone for India and celebrates the enduring legacy of this unique institution located in Bengal's Birbhum district.
- India has long been striving to secure a UNESCO designation for Santiniketan, acknowledging its cultural and historical significance. The decision to include Santiniketan in the prestigious list was made during the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee, held in Saudi Arabia, reaffirming its importance on the global stage.
- Santiniketan's inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List is a testament to its cultural and educational significance. This recognition reaffirms the importance of preserving and promoting the legacy of Rabindranath Tagore and the institution he built.

Professor Ramesh Chand launches Unified Portal www.upag.gov.in for Agricultural Statistics

- In a significant development for India's agricultural sector, the government has unveiled the UPAG (Unified Portal for Agricultural Statistics). This groundbreaking initiative is aimed at tackling the complex governance challenges that currently beset the country's farming industry.
- The Ministry of Agriculture hails UPAG as an innovative platform meticulously crafted to streamline and enhance data management within the agricultural domain. It represents a crucial stride towards establishing a more efficient and responsive agricultural policy framework.

- Ramesh Chand, a member of NITI Aayog, expressed his enthusiasm after inaugurating the portal. He emphasized that such an initiative was long overdue and envisioned that it could grow into a substantial resource for the agricultural sector. Chand urged the Agriculture Ministry, which will oversee the portal, to prioritize data credibility, as objective data minimizes the need for subjective judgment in policymaking. This, in turn, fosters stability, transparency, and informed decision-making.

SPORTS

India won Asia Cup 2023 Title, beat Sri Lanka in Final

- On September 17, 2023, at Colombo's R. Premadasa Stadium, India secured their eighth Asia Cup title by defeating Sri Lanka by 10 wickets in the final match. This victory marked India's first Asia Cup win since 2018. Sri Lanka won the toss and chose to bat first, but they were dismissed for a meager 50 runs, marking the lowest total ever in an Asia Cup final. Mohammed Siraj was the standout performer among the Indian bowlers, claiming 6 wickets for just 21 runs. In response, India effortlessly reached the target in a mere 6.1 overs without losing a wicket. Ishan Kishan contributed 23 runs off 18 balls, while Shubhman Gill scored 27 runs off 19 balls.

Asia Cup 2023 Award Winners

Winner: India (8th title)

Runner-up: Sri Lanka

Man of the Tournament: Kuldeep Yadav

Most runs in Asia Cup 2023: S Gill (302 runs)

Man of the Match in the Final: Mohammed Siraj

Most wickets in Asia Cup 2023: M Pathirana (SL) with 11 wickets

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

IRS Officer Rahul Navin Appointed In-Charge Chief Of Enforcement Directorate

- IRS (Indian Revenue Service) officer Rahul Navin assumed the role of In-Charge Director of the Enforcement Directorate (ED), succeeding the outgoing Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra. This transition marks an important development in the leadership of the ED, a crucial agency responsible for enforcing economic laws and regulations in India. Mr. Navin is currently serving as the Special Director of the Enforcement Directorate.
- The official order further stated that the tenure of Sanjay Kumar Mishra as the Director of Enforcement in the Enforcement Directorate concluded on the 15th of September, 2023. This event follows a series of legal developments and extensions that ultimately led to the conclusion of Mr. Mishra's tenure.

Srinivasan K Swamy elected ABC chairman for 2023-24

- In a unanimous decision, Srinivasan K. Swamy, the Executive Chairman of R.K. Swamy Hansa Group, has been elected as the Chairman of the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) for the term 2023-2024. This significant appointment reflects Mr. Swamy's extensive experience and leadership in the advertising and media industry. Alongside

Mr. Swamy, other prominent figures were also elected to key positions within the Bureau for the upcoming year.

- Srinivasan K. Swamy is a highly regarded figure in the advertising and media world. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Asian Federation of Advertising Associations and has held pivotal leadership roles in numerous prominent organizations.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

84 artistes, above 75 years, conferred with Sangeet Natak Akademi Amrit Awards

- Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, in a momentous ceremony, presented the one-time Sangeet Natak Akademi Amrit Awards to 84 distinguished artistes from various realms of the performing arts. The significance of these awards lies in their aim to honor Indian artists aged above 75 years, who, despite their remarkable contributions, have not received any national recognition in their illustrious careers thus far.
- The list includes three artists from Andhra Pradesh, two from Arunachal Pradesh, and six from Maharashtra. Furthermore, three recipients each hailed from Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. Additionally, two artists each from Punjab and Delhi also received recognition.

Awardee	Artistic Genre	Contributions / Achievements
Mahabir Nayak (Jharkhand)	Music (Folk)	Celebrated for remarkable contributions to music
Harishchandra Prabhakar Borkar (Maharashtra)	Theatre	Acknowledged for significant contributions to theatre
Dharmeswar Nath (Assam)	Dance	Lauded for outstanding achievements in dance
Raghubir Malik	Hindustani Vocal	Notable in the world of Hindustani vocal
Dina Nath Mishra	Hindustani Vocal	Notable in the world of Hindustani vocal
Gowri Kuppuswamy	Carnatic Vocal	Lauded for mastery of Carnatic vocal
Anasuya Kulkarni	Carnatic Vocal	Lauded for mastery of Carnatic vocal
Lalitha Srinivasan	Bharatnatyam	Spotlight shone for expertise in Bharatnatyam
Vilasini Devi Krishnapillai	Bharatnatyam	Spotlight shone for expertise in Bharatnatyam
Smita Shastri	Kuchipudi	Celebrated for exceptional contributions to Kuchipudi

Awardee	Artistic Genre	Contributions / Achievements
Kumkum Lal	Odishi	Celebrated for exceptional contributions to Odishi
Krishen Langoo (Jammu and Kashmir)	Theatre, Music (Folk)	Recognized for achievements in theatre and folk music
John Claro Fernandes (Goa)	Playwriting	Notable for contributions to playwriting in Goa
Tsering Stanzin (Ladakh)	Folk Music	Recognized for contributions to folk music in Ladakh

Karachi's Erica Robin Wins Miss Universe Pakistan 2023

- Erica Robin, a model from Karachi has been crowned “Miss Universe Pakistan 2023”, becoming the first-ever woman from the country to win the title. Four other models from different parts of the country participated in the beauty pageant, including Hira Inam from Lahore, Jessical Wilson from Rawalpindi, Pakistani-American Malika Alvi from Pennsylvania, and Sabrina Wasim. Jessica Wilson, a 28-year-old cyber security engineer was named first runner-up while Hira Inam (24), Malyka Alvi (19), and Sabrina Wasim (26) were the rest of the finalists.
- Award-winning actress, mental health advocate, and former Miss International Kylie Verzosa from the Philippines was one of the distinguished panel of judges who picked the winner.

BANKING AND ECONOMY

RBI Slaps Rs14 Lakh Penalty on 4 Cooperative Banks

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently took action against four cooperative banks, imposing monetary penalties due to various rule violations. Below, we provide a breakdown of the penalties and the reasons behind them.

1. Baramati Sahakari Bank – Rs 2 Lakh Penalty

Violation: Failure to Credit Interest to Inoperative Savings Accounts

2. Becharaji Nagarik Sahakari Bank – Rs 2 Lakh Penalty

Violation: Breach of Prudential Inter-Bank Counter-Party Exposure Limits

3. Waghodia Urban Co-operative Bank – Rs 5 Lakh Penalty

Violations: Breach of Prudential Inter-Bank Counter-Party Exposure Limits and Non-Payment of Interest on Recurring Deposits and Term Deposits

4. Viramgam Mercantile Co-operative Bank – Rs 5 Lakh Penalty

Violation: Not Specified in the Release