

Weekly Current Affairs 28th August to 2nd September English

National News

Khanan Prahari App Helping to Curb Illegal Coal Mining Activities Through Public Participation

Illegal coal mining poses a significant risk to both the environment and the economy of India. In response to this issue, the government has introduced the Khanan Prahari App. This mobile application allows citizens to report any suspicious activities related to coal mining in their vicinity, thereby contributing to the fight against this illegal practice.

The Khanan Prahari mobile app is an initiative led by the Ministry of Coal, aimed at curbing illegal coal mining through public participation.

This app works in tandem with the Coal Mine Surveillance & Management System (CMSMS) web portal, developed in collaboration with the Bhaskaracharya Institute of Space Application & Geoinformatics and CMPDI, Ranchi.

By leveraging space technology and e-governance, the government aims to address the multifaceted challenges posed by illegal coal mining.

Draupadi Murmu released Postage Stamp in memory of Dadi Prakashmani

On 25th August, 2023, a special event took place at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre as President Draupadi Murmu unveiled a postage stamp in memory of Dadi Prakashmani. This initiative has been taken on the 16th death anniversary of Dadi Prakashmani under the 'My Stamp' initiative of the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications. The commemorative postage stamp unveiled by President Draupadi Murmu on the 16th death anniversary of Dadi Prakashmani, holds a deep significance. This initiative stands as an evident to the enduring influence and remarkable contribution of Dadi Prakashmani to both spirituality and society. The stamp not only immortalizes her legacy but also symbolizes the timeless wisdom she imparted and the positive change she brought.

India, Asian Development Bank to set up climate change and health hub in Delhi

India is now all set to open a climate change and health hub in the national capital Delhi in partnership with the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Earlier, India had bagged the first WHO Centre for Global Traditional Medicine. WHO Centre for Global Traditional Medicine was set up in Jamnagar, Gujarat. The new hub for climate change and health will facilitate knowledge sharing, promote partnerships and innovations, and also help countries beyond the G-20, especially developing countries. In its recently released G-20 outcome document, India also noted that climate change will continue to drive health emergencies, including the emergence and re-emergence of infectious diseases, and by increasing the severity and frequency of natural disasters, thereby

threatening to overwhelm health systems' ability to deliver essential services. Prioritize climate-resilient health systems development, build sustainable and low-carbon/low greenhouse gas (GHG) emission health systems and healthcare supply chains that deliver high-quality healthcare, mobilize resources for resilient, low-carbon sustainable health systems, and Facilitate collaboration, including initiatives such as the WHO-led Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH).

A Chapter On National War Memorial Included In NCERT Curriculum Of Class VII From This Year

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has taken a significant step towards fostering patriotism and inculcating core values in school children by introducing a new chapter in the Class 7 English textbook. The chapter, titled "A Homage to Our Brave Soldiers," revolves around the National War Memorial and its profound significance in the history of India. The newly incorporated chapter provides an insightful exploration into the history and importance of the National War Memorial. It delves into the monumental sacrifice offered by the valiant soldiers of the Armed Forces post-independence. The chapter's presentation takes the form of an exchange of heartfelt letters between two friends. Through these letters, the students express their profound gratitude for the freedoms they enjoy, which have been safeguarded by the selfless sacrifices of these bravehearts.

Akashvani organizes event related to KIP under the aegis of Ministry of External Affairs

Akashvani, India's national public radio broadcaster, organized a special event on 28th August in New Delhi as part of the Know India Programme (KIP), an initiative under the aegis of Ministry of External Affairs. The event witnessed the participation of around 55 students of Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) who had gathered from various corners of the world. The event organized on 28th August in New Delhi marks the 67th edition of the Know India Programme (KIP), an evident to the sustained commitment of the Ministry of External Affairs to connect with the Indian diaspora youth. Chandranie Sukhdeo, a student hailing from Guyana, expressed her heartfelt appreciation for the Indian Government's initiative, which has bestowed upon her the wonderful opportunity to explore the land of her ancestors. She shared her excitement about the chance to visit India's historical landmarks and experience the country's vibrant cultural heritage firsthand. Shivani Jhagroe, another participant from Suriname, described India as a second home and expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to delve deeper into the heart of her ancestral land.

Government To Celebrate Sixth Rashtriya Poshan Maah 2023 In September

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is celebrating the 6th Rashtriya Poshan Maah throughout September 2023. This year, the objective is to comprehensively tackle malnutrition through a life-cycle approach. The focal point of Poshan Maah 2023 is to cultivate widespread awareness concerning critical human life stages: pregnancy, infancy, childhood, and adolescence. The aim is to foster nutritional understanding across India through a theme centered on “Suposhit Bharat, Sakshar Bharat, Sashakt Bharat” (Nutrition-rich India, Educated India, Empowered India). The Government of India’s flagship initiative, POSHAN Abhiyaan, has been instrumental in advancing nutritional outcomes for pregnant women, lactating mothers, adolescent girls, and children under 6 years of age in a comprehensive manner. Launched by Hon’ble Prime Minister, POSHAN (Prime Minister’s Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition) Abhiyaan operates in mission mode to combat the challenge of malnutrition. During the 15th Financial Commission period, Poshan Abhiyaan, the Anganwadi Services Scheme, and the Scheme for Adolescent Girls were aligned under Mission Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0 to launch an integrated nutrition support programme aimed at strengthening content, delivery, outreach, and outcomes.

India’s Largest Home-Built Nuclear Plant Starts Operations

In a significant development for India’s energy sector, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the 700 MW nuclear power plant located in Kakrapar, Gujarat, has commenced its operations at maximum capacity. This milestone marks a pivotal moment in India’s quest for energy self-sufficiency and underscores the nation’s commitment to harnessing indigenous nuclear technology. The Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP) had initiated its commercial operations on June 30, 2023, but initially operated at only 90 percent of its capacity. On August 31, 2023, the plant finally achieved its full operational potential. The Kakrapar Nuclear Power Plant is a testament to India’s capability in developing and operating nuclear power facilities entirely on its own. The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) has been at the forefront of this endeavor.

Union Minister Piyush Goyal Unveils Statue of First Finance Minister Of Independent India

In an event organized by the South Indian Panchayat Association in Coimbatore, Piyush Goyal, the Union Minister of Textiles, inaugurated the statue of RK Shanmugam Chetty, who served as the first Finance Minister of independent India. Commencing the event, a statue paying homage to RK Shanmugam Chetty, a pivotal figure in India’s historical narrative and a significant administrator within the South Indian Panchayat Association, was unveiled. This statue now resides within the esteemed confines of the South Indian Panchayat Sangha complex, situated in the Racecourse area of

Coimbatore. This act not only served as a tribute to Chetty’s remarkable contributions but also as a lasting homage to his enduring legacy, which remains a source of inspiration and guidance to this day. Ramasamy Chetty Kandasamy Shanmukham Chetty, known as R.K. Shanmukham Chetty, was a prominent Indian lawyer, economist, and politician who played a pivotal role in the early years of independent India. He held significant positions in both government and academia during his distinguished career.

ASI Launches “Adopt a Heritage 2.0 programme” Indian Heritage app and e-permission portal

To ensure the preservation and enhancement of India’s rich cultural heritage and its invaluable cultural legacy, the ASI (Archaeological Survey of India) is set to launch the “Adopt a Heritage 2.0” programme on September 4, 2023, at the Samvet Auditorium, IGNC, New Delhi. The “Adopt a Heritage 2.0” programme is a revamped and dynamic initiative building on the foundation laid by its predecessor launched in 2017. This program is designed to facilitate corporate stakeholders’ active involvement in improving amenities at heritage sites by utilizing their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds. The goal is to enhance the overall visitor experience while preserving and showcasing India’s cultural treasures. Under this program, corporate entities are invited to adopt a monument or specific amenities at a monument through a dedicated web portal, accessible at www.indianheritage.gov.in. The portal provides comprehensive details of the monuments available for adoption, along with gap analysis and financial estimates for the required amenities.

International News

Emmerson Mnangagwa Wins Second Term As President Of Zimbabwe

Emmerson Mnangagwa has been declared the winner of Zimbabwe’s presidential election, securing a second term as the nation’s leader. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) announced Mnangagwa as the victor with 52.6% of the vote, while his closest rival, Nelson Chamisa of the Citizens’ Coalition for Change (CCC), trailed behind at 44%. This election marks a significant moment in Zimbabwe’s political landscape, occurring six years after the fall of longtime ruler Robert Mugabe, who was ousted from power in a military coup. Born on 15 September 1942, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa is a prominent Zimbabwean politician who assumed the role of Zimbabwe’s President on 24 November 2017. A dedicated member of (Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front) ZANU-PF and a close associate of former President Robert Mugabe, Mnangagwa occupied various key ministerial positions and served as Mugabe’s Vice-President until November 2017. Taking the helm at the age of 80, Mnangagwa’s ascendancy followed a 2017 military coup that deposed Zimbabwe’s longstanding leader, Robert

Mugabe, who had held authority since the country's independence in 1980. During the mid-1980s, Mnangagwa held responsibility for internal security. Mnangagwa was nicknamed as "The Crocodile," a creature renowned in Zimbabwean legend for its cunning and unyielding nature."

Russia Launches Islamic Banking Pilot Program: Exploring Shariah-based Finance

Russia is set to embark on a historic journey by launching its first Islamic banking pilot program on September 1. With a considerable Muslim population of approximately 25 million, the move aims to tap into the potential of Islamic finance, which has already had a presence through institutions but lacked official recognition. President Vladimir Putin's recent endorsement of the initiative signifies a significant step towards embracing Islamic banking principles in the country.

Tharman Shanmugaratnam Wins Singapore Presidential Election

In a significant political development, Indian-origin economist Tharman Shanmugaratnam has emerged victorious in Singapore's presidential election. This victory is especially noteworthy as it comes after a gap of ten years, marking the country's first contested presidential polls since 2011. Tharman Shanmugaratnam secured a substantial majority in the presidential elections, receiving a resounding 70.4 percent of the votes. His victory was achieved against two other contenders of Chinese origin, Ng Kok Song and Tan Kin Lian, who garnered 15.7 percent and 13.88 percent of the votes, respectively. Tharman Shanmugaratnam, the president-elect, entered the realm of politics in 2001. During his campaign, he articulated a vision for Singapore, promising to cultivate the country's culture and uphold its standing as a "shining spot" on the global stage. Shanmugaratnam, aged sixty-six, previously held the position of Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister from 2011 to 2019. His political journey began in 2001, and he has also made significant contributions in the public sector, holding various ministerial positions.

Georgia Declares October as 'Hindu Heritage Month'

In a significant move, Governor Brian Kemp of the U.S. state of Georgia has officially declared that the month of October will be celebrated as 'Hindu Heritage Month' within the state. This proclamation aligns Georgia with several other states across the United States that have taken similar steps to honor and commemorate Hindu heritage, culture, values, and traditions. Georgia joins a growing list of states that have recognized the importance of Hindu heritage and culture. These states include Texas, Ohio, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Florida, Minnesota, Virginia, and others. The declaration of 'Hindu Heritage Month' serves as a way to celebrate and acknowledge the contributions and significance of Hinduism in American society.

Indo-US Task Force Aims to Boost Electronics Trade to \$100 Billion by 2033

In a remarkable endeavor to strengthen trade relations between India and the United States within the electronics sector, the Indian Cellular & Electronics Association (ICEA) has established a dedicated task force. With a goal to elevate the current Indo-US electronics trade, currently at \$8 billion, to an ambitious \$100 billion within the next decade, this initiative follows collaborative efforts initiated after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to the United States last month. Ambitious Trade Target: ICEA Chairman Pankaj Mohindroo emphasized that achieving this monumental goal would significantly bolster India's aspirations to become a global hub for innovation and manufacturing in the electronics sector. Comprehensive Representation: ICEA, serving as the apex industry body, represents the entire electronics ecosystem in India, including components, subassemblies, EMS (Electronic Manufacturing Services), and finished goods across various Electronic System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) verticals, such as mobile phones, consumer electronics, and IT hardware.

New Launch Bilingual

West Bengal

Test Mate

WBCS | WBPSA | WBSSC & Others

450+ Total Tests

State News

Assam Cabinet Creates 4 New Districts, 81 Sub-Districts After Delimitation

In a significant move aimed at enhancing decentralization of governance and improving the convergence of line departments, the Assam cabinet has taken a bold step by creating four new districts that were previously abolished last year in December. With the addition of these new districts, Assam's total district count will reach 35. The decision comes in line with the ongoing delimitation process that has been initiated after the Election Commission's (EC) decision to redefine Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies in Assam as per Section 8A of the RP Act, 1950. The newly formed districts are Hojai, Biswanath, Tamulpur, and Bajali.

Nagaland Becomes First State In North Eastern Region To Initiate Aadhaar Linked Birth Registration

Nagaland has taken a pioneering step in the North Eastern region by launching the Aadhaar-Linked Birth Registration (ALBR) system. This groundbreaking initiative focuses on simplifying the procedures of birth registration and Aadhaar enrolment for children aged 0 to 5 years. The commencement of the launch was formally led by Commissioner T Mhabemo Yanthan. During the launch event, there was a live demonstration that resulted in the successful registration of two newborn infants. This achievement represents a noteworthy advancement in guaranteeing that every child can rightfully access social welfare services. The initiative aims to improve the overall journey for both parents and children throughout the crucial phases of birth registration and Aadhaar enrolment. Through ALBR, the process of Aadhaar enrolment occurs simultaneously with birth, seamlessly intertwining it with the registration process. This enrollment method is facilitated smoothly using a tablet under the supervision of (Child Enrolment Lite Client) CELC Operators, necessitating only a proof of relationship document for enrolling the child.

West Bengal News

Kolkata Becomes 3rd Indian City To Get Air Quality Early Warning System

The Indian city of Kolkata has taken a significant step forward by adopting an Air Quality Early Warning System (AQEWS), developed by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) based in Pune. This system offers both real-time air pollution data and forecasts, with the objective of enhancing readiness and facilitating measures to tackle the escalating air pollution levels within the city. The AQEWS in Kolkata comes equipped with an intricate network of sensors that monitor the air quality index (AQI) in real-time. This AQI is a standardized metric used to assess the level of air pollution in a specific area, with values ranging from 0 to 500. A higher AQI indicates more polluted air and an increased health concern. The AQEWS provides this data by analyzing the concentration of pollutants like PM2.5 (particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller), which has been identified as a major contributor to health problems due to its ability to penetrate deep into the lungs.

Economy News

India's GDP growth accelerates to 7.8% in April-June quarter

In a significant economic development, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) demonstrated robust growth, surging to 7.8% in the first quarter of the fiscal year 2023-2024, compared to a 6.1% growth rate recorded in the preceding January-March quarter of the fiscal year 2022-23. This acceleration is indicative of a positive economic

trajectory and holds great implications for the nation's financial landscape. Looking back at the same quarter in the previous year, the GDP growth rate stood at a remarkable 13.1%. This highlights both the progress and the challenges that the Indian economy has faced over the past year. The impressive Q1FY24 economic growth can be attributed primarily to the exceptional performance of the services sector, which has displayed remarkable resilience and adaptability. Additionally, a surge in capital expenditure has contributed significantly to this growth trajectory.

Rankings & Reports News

All-India House Price Index Surges 5.1% in Q1FY24: RBI's Latest Data

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has unveiled its latest data, revealing a significant upswing in the All-India House Price Index (HPI). In the April-June quarter of the fiscal year 2023-24, the HPI recorded a robust growth rate of 5.1%. This marks a noteworthy increase compared to the 3.4% growth observed during the same period in the previous year. The RBI's quarterly HPI report draws upon transaction-level data sourced from registration authorities in ten major cities across India. These cities include Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Jaipur, Kanpur, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow, and Mumbai. The growth trends within these cities exhibit considerable diversity. Delhi Leads with 14.9% Growth: Among the cities, Delhi stands out with an impressive annual HPI growth rate of 14.9%. This substantial increase underscores the city's robust real estate market. Kolkata Witnesses a Contraction: In contrast, Kolkata experienced a decline in house prices, with a contraction of 6.6%. This variation highlights the disparities in housing market performance across different regions.

Business News

Zepto is first Indian unicorn of 2023, raises \$200 million at \$1.4 billion valuation

Online grocery delivery startup Zepto has successfully raised \$200 million in a Series-E funding round, achieving a valuation of \$1.4 billion. This achievement marks Zepto as the first unicorn of 2023. The funding was led by StepStone Group, a US-based private markets investment firm, and is StepStone Group's inaugural direct investment in an Indian company. Joining StepStone Group in this funding round is Goodwater Capital, a consumer-focused venture capital firm from California.

Noteworthy is the participation of existing investors, including Nexus Venture Partners, Glade Brook Capital, Lachy Groom, among others, who further solidified their support with substantial follow-on investments.

Zepto, established in response to the pandemic, was founded in 2021 by Aadit Palicha and Kaivalya Vohra, both dropouts from Stanford University.

The startup had previously raised \$200 million in a Series D funding round in 2022, led by Y Combinator's Continuity Fund, which valued the company at \$900 million.

Zepto's founders have also expressed their intention to list the company on public markets within the next two to three years.

Tata Steel and ACME Group Join Forces For India's Largest Green Hydrogen Project

In a significant partnership, ACME Group, a prominent renewable energy company, has joined forces with Tata Steel Special Economic Zone Ltd. (TSSEZL) to establish an expansive green hydrogen and green ammonia project within Odisha's Gopalpur Industrial Park. This venture is poised to become the largest facility of its kind in India, marking a significant stride towards sustainable energy production. The project is set to be situated at the Gopalpur Industrial Park (GIP) in Odisha, strategically chosen for its logistical advantages and existing infrastructure. ACME Group has secured 343 acres of land within TSSEZL's GIP to house the green hydrogen and derivatives unit, underlining their commitment to eco-friendly energy solutions. The estimated investment for the entire project amounts to Rs 27,000 crore, to be invested in progressive phases, reflecting the strategic approach to development.

Viacom 18 Secures BCCI TV and Digital Media Rights in a 5-Year Deal Worth Rs 5,963 Crore

Viacom 18, a Reliance-owned media outlet, has emerged victorious in the auction for media rights, encompassing both digital and TV broadcasting, of India's domestic matches and BCCI-hosted domestic tournaments for the next five years. The auction took place on August 31, 2023. This significant acquisition complements Viacom 18's existing digital rights for the Indian Premier League (IPL) and the FIFA World Cup rights for India. Let's delve deeper into the details. Viacom 18 faced fierce competition from Sony Sports Network and Star Sports in the bidding process. Star Sports already held TV rights for ICC events and the IPL, leaving Sony to vie for these coveted rights. For the 88 matches scheduled between 2023 and 2028, the BCCI set a base price of Rs 20 crore per match for TV rights and Rs 25 crore per match for digital rights, totaling Rs 3,960 crore.

Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Gets Navratna Status

The Department of Public Enterprise (DPE) conferred 'Navratna Status' upon Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers (RCF). Navratnas constitute a group of public sector firms endowed with the financial independence to invest up to Rs 1000 crore without necessitating approval from the central government. Prior to this, the company had attained 'Miniratna Status' from the Department of Public Enterprise. Navratna Companies, a select group of nine esteemed public sector enterprises in India, are renowned for their outstanding performance and significant contributions to the nation's economy. These companies enjoy substantial financial independence, granting them the authority to make

investment decisions for projects up to a specific threshold without requiring government approval. Navratna Companies, classified as Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), are subject to specific operational and financial criteria based on factors such as net profit, total production cost, earnings per share, and cross-sector performance.

CCI Clears Air India-Vistara Merger

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has recently given the green light to the merger of Tata SIA Airlines, which operates under the Vistara brand, with Air India, a subsidiary of Tata Sons Pvt. Ltd. This landmark merger also involves Singapore Airlines (SIA) and entails the acquisition of shares in the merged entity, Air India, subject to certain voluntary commitments. TSAL (Tata SIA Airlines Limited) is a joint venture between the Tata Group and the Singapore Airlines with the former holding 51% and the latter 49%. Tata Sons Pvt. Ltd. made headlines in January 2022 when it acquired Air India through its subsidiary, Talace Pvt. Ltd. This move signaled Tata's resurgence in the Indian aviation sector, setting the stage for what was to come. The subsequent merger with Tata SIA Airlines, also known as Vistara, is poised to create a formidable force in the Indian skies.

Agreement News

GSL and Kenya Shipyard Ltd Sign MoU For Collaboration In Shipbuilding

With its efforts to enhance security of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), especially on the eastern coast of Africa, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) and Kenya Shipyards Limited (KSL) to strengthen maritime security cooperation between the two nations. The agreement focuses on capacity building and collaboration in ship design and construction. The MoU was formalized in the presence of India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Defence Aden Bare Duale during their talks in New Delhi. This signing reflects the shared commitment of both nations to deepen their collaboration in maritime security. As one of the largest exporters of defence ships from the Indian subcontinent, GSL brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the partnership. On the other hand, Kenya Shipyards Limited was established by Kenya's National Security Council in August 2020 to address the operational requirements of the Kenyan Navy.

NITI Aayog and UNDP Collaborate to Accelerate SDGs in India

The National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), the central think tank responsible for monitoring India's progress towards Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have signed a significant Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at expediting India's journey towards achieving its SDGs. This collaboration underscores the commitment to

drive sustainable and inclusive development in the country. BVR Subrahmanyam, CEO of NITI Aayog, expressed optimism about the partnership's potential impact: "With monitoring going beyond districts down to the block level, we see this partnership fostering data-driven policy interventions and programmatic action." This data-centric approach is expected to facilitate more precise and effective policy decisions, contributing to sustainable development.

Appointment News

Former CJI NV Ramana appointed as member of International Mediation Panel

Former Chief Justice of India (CJI) N.V. Ramana has been appointed as member of the International Mediator Panel of Singapore International Mediation Centre (SIMC). Chairman of SIMC George Lim presented Justice Ramana the letter of appointment on Tuesday in Singapore. The former CJI is in Singapore to take part in the "Singapore Convention Week", the annual convention organised by Singapore's Ministry of Law, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and over 20 partner organisations. Justice Ramana met representatives of SIMC and four top Indian corporate majors Tata, Reliance, Mahindra and Aditya Birla groups, who came forward to sign 'Declaration of Intent' to support mediation at the initiative of Justice Ramana.

Geetika Srivastava becomes India's First Woman Charge d'Affaires In Pakistan

Geetika Srivastava, currently serving as joint secretary at the headquarters of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), will be India's new chargé d'affaires at its high commission in Islamabad, Pakistan. She will succeed Suresh Kumar, who is likely to return to New Delhi. After 77 years of Independence, India has appointed a female head of mission in Pakistan. The appointment of Geetika Srivastava as the new CDA in Islamabad signifies a progressive step by the Indian government as it breaks the traditional male-dominated pattern of diplomatic appointments to Pakistan. This is a significant move as Srivastava will be the first woman to lead the Indian High Commission in Pakistan, reflecting a commitment to gender equality and empowering women in leadership roles.

Anand Mahindra welcomes MS Dhoni as Brand ambassador of Swaraj Tractors

Industrialist Anand Mahindra has welcomed Mahindra Singh Dhoni as the cricketer became a brand ambassador of his Swaraj Tractors. There have been times when Mahendra Singh Dhoni has expressed his passion for farming. And now, he has become a brand ambassador of Swaraj Tractors. Dhoni's rise from Ranchi to being one of the most well known cricketers on the planet is a stuff of legends. He has one of the most inspiring journeys in sports history. He is the most successful Indian cricket team captain who has won the Cricket World Cup twice, in the ODI and the T20I formats.

Dhoni continues to inspire the young generation with his intact dedication and seriousness towards his goal. This is the reason the fans continue to show their love and respect towards the player despite he retiring from international cricket three years back. Swaraj Tractors is an Indian tractor manufacturing company headquartered in Mohali, Punjab. It is a subsidiary of Mahindra & Mahindra. Swaraj Tractors was established in 1974 with a mission to be self-reliant and develop India's first Indigenous tractor. Today, it is one of the leading tractor manufacturers in India, with a market share of over 10%.

Jaya Verma Sinha 1st Woman Chairperson to Head the Railway Board

The government appointed Jaya Verma Sinha as the first woman Chairperson of the Railway Board, the top decision-making body for the Ministry of Railways. Ms. Sinha is the first ever woman to head the Board in its 118-year-old history. The Railway Board came into effect in 1905. She will assume office on or after September 1, and before this she was the Member (Operations and Business Development). She was at the forefront while handling the aftermath of the tragic Balasore accident which killed 291 people. Her tenure will be till August 31, 2024.

R Madhavan Nominated as President of FTII Pune

Renowned actor R Madhavan has been nominated as the new President of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune. Additionally, he will serve as the Chairman of the governing council of FTII. Madhavan's nomination follows the recent success of his film, 'Rocketry: The Nambi Effect,' which earned national recognition. The film secured the prestigious Best Feature Film award during the 69th National Film Awards. The acclaimed film, 'Rocketry: The Nambi Effect,' delves into the life of former ISRO scientist S Nambi Narayanan and his remarkable contributions to India's space agency. Its recognition with a national award is a testament to its compelling storytelling and relevance in showcasing India's scientific achievements. Coincidentally, the National Award for 'Rocketry' was conferred on August 24th, just a day after a historic achievement by ISRO. On August 23rd, ISRO successfully achieved the landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the South Pole of the lunar surface. This dual recognition highlights India's prowess in both cinematic storytelling and space exploration.

Banking News

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approves merger of Akola Merchant Co-operative Bank with Jalgaon Peoples Co-operative Bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted its approval for the amalgamation of Akola Merchant Co-operative Bank with The Jalgaon Peoples Co-operative Bank. This strategic move is set to be enacted from August 28, as announced by the central bank.

The branches of Akola Merchant Co-operative Bank will be seamlessly integrated as branches of The Jalgaon Peoples Co-operative Bank starting from August 28.

This integration aims to streamline operations and services for customers under a unified entity.

The RBI had recently given the nod for the amalgamation of Twin Cities Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd with Kranti Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd, signifying a trend of such consolidations in the co-operative banking sector.

Airtel Payments Bank partners with Frontier Markets, Mastercard to support 1 lakh women-owned businesses

Airtel Payments Bank, in collaboration with Mastercard Center and Frontier Markets, has introduced a transformative initiative named She Leads Bharat:Udyam. This initiative is designed to uplift 100,000 women-owned small businesses by providing them with opportunities to learn and earn. The initial phase of She Leads Bharat:Udyam is set to impact women-owned small businesses in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Through Frontier Markets' unique Meri-Saheli platform, 100,000 such businesses will gain the ability to learn and earn. This platform, known for its flexibility and proprietary nature, will empower these businesses by offering a range of opportunities. Among the 100,000 women small business owners, 10,000 will be provided the chance to expand their enterprises by becoming Business Correspondents (BCs) for Airtel Payments Bank. This strategic step is aligned with Airtel Payments Bank's commitment to empower rural women to embark on entrepreneurial journeys.

SBI launches Aadhaar-Based Enrolment For Social Security Schemes

The State Bank of India (SBI) has taken a significant step towards enhancing financial inclusivity and social welfare by introducing an innovative Customer Service Points (CSP) functionality. This functionality allows customers to seamlessly enrol in essential social security schemes using just their Aadhaar cards. The move was unveiled by SBI's Chairman, Dinesh Khara, who emphasized the bank's commitment to breaking down barriers to financial security through technology-driven solutions. This newly introduced technology-driven enhancement stands as a testament to SBI's dedication to improving financial inclusivity and social welfare through digitization. This strategic step aims to make the process of accessing social security schemes smoother and more accessible to all individuals, especially those who have faced challenges in navigating traditional financial systems.

Bandhan Bank Authorized by RBI for Civil Pension Disbursement

In a significant development, Bandhan Bank has been granted authorization by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to serve as an authorized pension disbursement bank. This authorization is in association with the Central Pension Accounting Office (CPAO), a part of the Ministry of Finance. The bank is set to

collaborate closely with the CPAO to initiate and streamline the process of disbursing civil pensions. Bandhan Bank's newfound role as an authorized pension disbursement bank bears substantial implications for a range of beneficiaries. This authorization enables the bank to effectively disburse pensions to a variety of recipients-

Central Government Employees, Territorial Scope, Judicial Retirees, All India Service Officers, Former Parliament Members, Distinguished Leaders.

Axis Bank Introduces 'Infinity Savings Account' with Zero Domestic Transaction Fees

Axis Bank, a prominent player in India's private banking sector, has taken a groundbreaking step by launching the 'Infinity Savings Account.' This innovative savings account variant is designed to cater to the needs of digitally savvy customers who are avid users of subscription-based services. With the 'Infinity Savings Account,' Axis Bank is set to redefine the banking experience, offering exclusive privileges and removing barriers that traditionally accompanied banking services. The 'Infinity Savings Account' comes with a range of exclusive privileges that aim to provide customers with a seamless and transparent banking journey.

PNB Launches App To Enable MSMEs Access Instant Loans Using GST Invoices

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has become the first public sector bank to facilitate effortless credit availability for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) via GST invoices. The bank has unveiled a dedicated mobile application for the GST Sahay scheme. This innovative digital solution facilitates comprehensive lending procedures based on GST invoices, ensuring a seamless end-to-end process. The newly launched PNB GST Sahay App transforms the entire loan application process into a digital format, eliminating the need for manual intervention on the borrower's part. The app streamlines the process, rendering it more cost-effective, expeditious, and efficient. Notably, the sanctioned loan amount will be directly deposited into the borrower's current account maintained with the bank.

Science & Technology News

ISRO Aditya L1 Mission Launched

ISRO Aditya L1 mission was launched successfully on September 2, 2023 at 11:50 AM IST from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, India. The mission is India's first dedicated solar mission and will study the Sun's atmosphere, including the chromosphere and corona. It will also study the solar wind and its interaction with the Earth's atmosphere. The Aditya L1 spacecraft is a 1.5-ton satellite that is equipped with seven payloads. The payloads will study the Sun's atmosphere using a variety of methods, including remote sensing and in-situ measurements. The spacecraft will be placed in a halo orbit around the Sun-Earth Lagrange Point 1 (L1), which is located about 1.5 million kilometers from Earth.

The Aditya L1 mission is expected to last for five years. During this time, it will collect valuable data about the Sun that will help scientists to better understand its behavior and its impact on Earth.

Schemes and Committees

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) Completes Nine Years Of Successful Implementation

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) – the National Mission for Financial Inclusion – completes nine years of successful implementation. Launched on 28th August 2014 by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the PMJDY stands as one of the most extensive financial inclusion initiatives globally, aimed at liberating the economically marginalized from a cycle of poverty. The Ministry of Finance, through the PMJDY, has been committed to fostering financial inclusiveness and providing support to economically disadvantaged sections. Financial Inclusion (FI) is a means of ensuring equitable growth and delivering financial services at reasonable costs to vulnerable groups, particularly those lacking access to basic banking services. One of the essential outcomes of financial inclusion is the integration of the poor's savings into the formal financial system, detaching them from exploitative moneylenders. Additionally, it facilitates the transfer of funds to families in rural areas, thus furthering the economic empowerment of these individuals.

Cabinet okays PRIP scheme to boost research and innovation

The Union Health Ministry has announced an ambitious plan to boost research and innovation in the pharmaceutical and medtech sectors. To achieve this goal, they have introduced the Promotion of Research & Innovation in Pharma-MedTech sector (PRIP) scheme, which has been approved by the Union Cabinet. The scheme was rolled out earlier this month by the government with the belief that the Indian pharmaceutical industry has the potential to increase its current 3.4 per cent share of the global market to 5 per cent by the year 2030.

Summits & Conference News

India Officially Hands Over B20 Presidency to Brazil to Host G20 Summit in 2024

In a significant development for global business and economic collaboration, India has gracefully handed over the B20 presidency to Brazil, making the transition towards the G20 summit in 2024. The B20, a group representing the business community at the G20 summit, played a pivotal role under India's leadership in shaping policies and fostering discussions on a range of critical global challenges. Led by N. Chandrasekaran, the B20 chaired by India, the presidency focused on the theme of "Vasudeva Katumbakam" - One Earth, One Family, One Future. The three day B20 summit, hosted by India from 25th August to 27th August, was characterized by the theme "R.A.I.S.E." - Responsible, Accelerated, Innovative,

Sustainable and Equitable Business. This theme summarises the core ideals that the B20 aims to propagate and prioritize. The summit brought together over 1,500 delegates representing approximately 55 countries, creating an atmosphere conducive to insightful discussions and multifaceted deliberations.

Awards & Honors News

SVAMITVA Scheme Of Ministry Of Panchayati Raj Won National Award For E-Governance 2023

The SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages Abadi and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) Scheme, initiated by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, has been honored with the prestigious National Award for e-Governance 2023 (Gold) in recognition of its groundbreaking application of emerging technologies to deliver citizen-centric services. The accolade was presented during the 26th National Conference on e-Governance (NCeG) held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Government of India. The two-day National Conference on e-Governance (NCeG) was jointly organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh. The event, themed "Viksit Bharat, Empowering Citizens," aimed to facilitate discussions on cutting-edge technologies, effective e-Governance strategies, and knowledge sharing among various stakeholders. The conference, held at the Brilliant Convention Centre in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, served as a vital platform for brainstorming and exchanging insights on the latest technologies driving e-Governance initiatives.

Rajasthan's Priyan Sain Crowned Miss Earth India 2023

Priyan Sain clinched the title of Miss Earth India 2023 during the Miss Divine Beauty 2023 national final held on August 26 in New Delhi. The 20-year-old student, dancer, and taekwondo player from Jaipur, Rajasthan succeeds last year's winner Vanshika Parmar, and will now prepare to represent India at the Miss Earth 2023 pageant in Vietnam this December. She received her crown from reigning Miss Earth from Korea Mina Sue Choi who was invited as a special guest along with Miss Earth Air from Australia Sheridan Mortlock. At the same event, Praveena Aanjna was named Miss International India 2023 while Pema Choden Bhutia and Tejaswini Shrivastava were both announced as runners-up. Prior to becoming a finalist for Miss Divine Beauty and eventually winning her national title, Priyan participated in Miss Rajasthan 2022 where she finished as first runner-up.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das Rated 'A+' In Global Finance Central Banker Report 2023

In a recent announcement that has garnered international attention, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das has been awarded an 'A+' rating in the prestigious Global

Finance Central Banker Report Cards 2023. This commendation places him at the pinnacle of central bank governors worldwide. The announcement was made by the RBI through its official communication channel on social media platform 'X' (formerly known as Twitter). This recognition has placed Shaktikanta Das at the top of the list of three central bank governors who have been rated 'A'. Joining Shaktikanta Das in the elite category of central bank governors who earned an 'A+' grade in the Global Finance Central Banker Report Cards 2023 are Thomas J. Jordan from Switzerland and Nguyen Thi Hong from Vietnam. This recognition solidifies Governor Das's standing as one of the most influential and effective central bank leaders in the world.

Important Dates News

National Sports Day 2023: Date, Theme, Significance and History

The National Sports Day in India is celebrated on 29 August 2023. This annual observance, held on August 29 in India, is a tribute to the enduring legacy of Major Dhyan Chand. The day also serves as a reminder for all of us to recall the contributions, determination and extraordinary achievements of the athletes and their influence in shaping societies. The theme of National Sports Day 2023 is not known yet. However, people can celebrate the day using #NationalSportsDay on social media posts. National Sports Day is also an occasion to raise awareness about the importance of sports and physical activity in our daily lives. Sports can help us stay fit and healthy, reduce stress, and build character. They can also teach us teamwork, discipline, and perseverance.

International Whale Shark Day 2023: Date, Significance and History

International Whale Shark Day is celebrated every year on August 30 to raise awareness about the plight of whale sharks, the largest fish in the world. Whale sharks are filter feeders and do not pose a threat to humans. However, they are vulnerable to overfishing, habitat loss, and boat strikes. The significance of International Whale Shark Day 2023 is to raise awareness about the plight of whale sharks, the largest fish in the world. Whale sharks are filter feeders and do not pose a threat to humans. However, they are vulnerable to overfishing, habitat loss, and boat strikes. The International Whale Shark Day was first commemorated in 2008 at the International Whale Shark Conference in Isla Holbox. The conference hosted 40 ocean experts, activists, and scientists who had a concern for the whale shark's declining population. While said sharks have been around for more than 240 to 260 million years, it wasn't until the 1820s that the whale shark was first discovered off the coast of South Africa. Dr. Andrew Smith rightfully described the fish as the largest shark to exist on earth.

World Sanskrit Day 2023: Date, Celebration, Significance and History

World Sanskrit Day, also referred to as International Sanskrit Day, Sanskrit Diwas and Vishwa Samskrita Dinam is observed on the day of Shravana Poornima in the Hindu calendar, which is also marked as Raksha Bandhan, which coincides with the moon. This year we will be celebrating Sanskrit Diwas on Thursday, 31st August. The purpose of this day is to raise awareness and promote Sanskrit, one of India's oldest languages. Sanskrit holds importance as it serves as the foundation, for classical texts in disciplines such as Literature, Philosophy, Mathematics and Science.

Sports News

HS Prannoy Clinches Bronze At BWF World Badminton Championships 2023

Indian badminton player HS Prannoy secured the bronze medal in the men's singles category at the prestigious BWF World Badminton Championships 2023. Despite a valiant effort, Prannoy was eliminated in the semi-finals that took place in Copenhagen, Denmark on Saturday. His remarkable journey in the tournament showcased his skill and determination on the international stage. World No. 9 HS Prannoy faced a formidable challenge in the semi-finals as he went head-to-head with Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn, ranked third in the badminton world. The intense match stretched over one hour and 16 minutes at the Royal Arena. Prannoy fought valiantly but was eventually edged out by his Thai counterpart with a scoreline of 21-18, 13-21, 14-21.

Max Verstappen wins Dutch Grand Prix 2023

Max Verstappen has won the Dutch Grand Prix for the third consecutive year, once again prevailing at his home race. With the dominant win, Verstappen has now matched Sebastian Vettel's all-time record of nine F1 victories in a row. Fernando Alonso managed to return to the podium on a weekend when Aston Martin fitted a revised floor to the car by crossing the line in second place. The other Red Bull of Sergio Perez crossed the line in third place, however a five-second penalty promoted Pierre Gasly to the podium. The race was held at Circuit Zandvoort in the Netherlands on Sunday, August 27, 2023.

FIFA lifts ban on Sri Lanka Football Federation

World governing body FIFA has lifted the ban on the Sri Lanka Football Federation (FFSL). The ban was imposed in January 2023 due to government interference in the federation's affairs. In a letter dated August 28 by Fatma Samoura, the FIFA secretary General, it said that the FIFA bureau had decided on 27 August "to lift the suspension of the FFSL with immediate effect". The FFSL has also agreed to hold fresh elections for its executive committee. The lifting of the ban is a major boost for Sri Lankan football. It means that the country's national team will be able to resume international competition and that the FFSL will be able to resume its development programs. The

FIFA Bureau's decision to lift the ban was welcomed by the Sri Lankan government and by the football community in the country. The government said that it was committed to supporting the development of football in Sri Lanka.

National Sports Day 2023: Theme, History and Importance

The National Sports Day 2023 in India is celebrated on 29 August 2023. This annual observance, held on August 29 in India, is a tribute to the enduring legacy of Major Dhyan Chand. The day also serves as a reminder for all of us to recall the contributions, determination, and extraordinary achievements of the athletes and their influence in shaping societies. The theme for National Sports Day 2023 celebration is "Sports are an enabler to an inclusive and fit society". National Sports Day is also an occasion to raise awareness about the importance of sports and physical activity in our daily lives. Sports can help us stay fit and healthy, reduce stress, and build character. They can also teach us teamwork, discipline, and perseverance. The roots of National Sports Day in India can be traced back to the birth of one of its most revered sporting legends, Major Dhyan Chand, who went on to become one of the most popular names in the game of hockey. Born on August 29, 1905, he started off his career with the British Indian Army regimental squad. His skills mesmerized the world, guiding India to three consecutive Olympic gold medals in 1928, 1932, and 1936.

Defence News

Indian Air Force Makes Its Debut In Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23 In Egypt

An Indian Air Force (IAF) contingent has embarked on a significant journey, marking the first-ever participation in Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23. This biennial multilateral tri-service exercise is taking place at Cairo (West) Air Base in Egypt, spanning from August 27 to September 16, 2023. The participation of the IAF in this exercise underscores a new chapter of cooperation and collaboration among nations. Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23 gathers not only the IAF but also contingents from esteemed nations such as the United States of America, Saudi Arabia, Greece, and Qatar. The convergence of these military forces in a common endeavor highlights the commitment to strengthening international partnerships, fostering interoperability, and promoting a shared understanding of joint operations. The Indian Air Force contingent for this exercise is an impressive assembly, comprising five MiG-29 aircraft, two IL-78 aircraft, two C-130 aircraft, and two C-17 aircraft. In addition to these aircraft, personnel from the IAF's distinguished Garud Special Forces and members of the Numbers 28, 77, 78, and 81 Squadrons will be actively participating. Notably, the IAF's transport aircraft will play a pivotal role in airlifting approximately 150 personnel from the Indian Army, showcasing the integrated efforts of different branches of the Indian Armed Forces.

Miscellaneous News

Why Zika Virus in news?

Zika virus, initially identified in Uganda in 1947, is primarily transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes, which are active during the day. While many infections are asymptomatic, those who show symptoms typically experience rash, fever, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, malaise, and headache for around 2-7 days. Zika infection during pregnancy can lead to microcephaly and congenital malformations in infants. Congenital Zika syndrome encompasses clinical features like limb contractures, high muscle tone, eye abnormalities, and hearing loss. Roughly 5-15% of infants born to Zika-infected mothers exhibit related complications, including those resulting from asymptomatic infections. Zika virus is also linked to Guillain-Barré syndrome, neuropathy, and myelitis, predominantly in adults and older children. Ongoing research investigates these neurological effects and their impact on pregnancy outcomes.

Kashmir to Host Miss World 2023 in December

In an exciting announcement, Julia Eric Morely, the CEO of Miss World, held a press conference in the picturesque region of Kashmir, India. The occasion marked the anticipation and preparation for the 71st edition of the prestigious Miss World beauty pageant, which is scheduled to be hosted in India. Morely's words echoed the sentiment of excitement and emotion surrounding the event, saying, "Truthfully, I am so happy. It is emotional for us, to see such beauty." CEO Morely expressed her enthusiasm for the upcoming event, inviting everyone to witness the grandeur in November, with the final show scheduled for December 8. She extended her gratitude to the people of Kashmir, applauding their warmth and hospitality and conveyed the Miss World organization's eagerness to return for the event. Following the press conference, rumors began circulating about the potential location of the pageant in the lush valleys of Kashmir. However, recent reports have clarified that no specific venue has been confirmed yet. Jamid Saidi, Chairman of PME Entertainment, took the opportunity to set the record straight. PME and the Miss World organization officially stated that the venue for the Miss World 2023 will be announced later.

Chokuwa Rice: The Enchanting "Magic Rice" of Assam Gets GI Tag

Chokuwa rice, fondly known as "Magic rice," has recently been bestowed with the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag, a recognition of its exceptional attributes and heritage. This remarkable rice variety is deeply intertwined with the culinary legacy of Assam and has a rich historical connection with the powerful Ahom dynasty. Ancient Legacy: Chokuwa rice, also referred to as Magic rice, has been a dietary cornerstone for centuries. It was a staple for the troops of the revered Ahom dynasty, echoing its historical significance.

Geographical Origin: The cultivation of Chokuwa rice is unique to the Brahmaputra River region, encompassing areas like Tinsukia, Dhemaji, and Dibrugarh in Assam.

Sali Rice Base: Chokuwa rice is a semi-glutinous winter rice variety, specifically categorized as Sali rice. Its distinctiveness lies in its sticky and glutinous characteristics, which are further classified into Bora and Chokuwa types based on their amylose content.

Bhaderwah Rajma & Ramban Sulai Honey Of Jammu And Kashmir Get GI Tag

In a significant development for the region, Bhaderwah Rajmash and Sulai honey, both hailing from the picturesque districts of Doda and Ramban in Jammu and Kashmir, have been granted coveted Geographical Indication (GI) tags. These tags serve as a testament to the unique qualities and characteristics of these local specialties and open up doors for their promotion and recognition on an international scale.

Bhaderwah Rajmash, often referred to as red beans holds a special place in the hearts and palates of those in the Chenab Valley. With its distinct flavor and texture, this legume is not only a staple food item but also a cultural symbol of the region.

The second GI tag is bestowed upon the honey produced in Sulai, located in Ramban district. This Sulai honey has gained recognition not only for its exquisite taste but also for its organic nature. In fact, in 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi presented organic Sulai honey to Queen Elizabeth during his visit to Britain, showcasing the region's natural bounty to the world.

