

## Weekly Current Affairs 4th to 9th September 2023 English

## National News

**Law Minister launches Tele-Law 2.0**

Access to justice is a fundamental right that every citizen should enjoy, regardless of their geographical location or socio-economic status. In a significant stride towards achieving this goal, the Union Minister of Law and Justice recently launched Tele-Law 2.0, a revamped version of the Tele-Law program. This initiative, operating under the DISHA Scheme by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice, aims to provide free legal aid to the rural and marginalized sections of society through video conferencing. The Tele-Law program achieved a remarkable milestone by successfully delivering 5 million legal consultations. This achievement underscores the program's unwavering commitment to making justice accessible to every corner of the country, particularly in rural and remote areas.

**Government Implements Stricter Regulations for SIM Card Sales**

The Indian government has taken decisive steps to enhance the safety and security of SIM card acquisition in the country. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued two crucial circulars, one targeting individual SIM card users and the other aimed at telecom companies like Airtel and Jio, with the goal of regulating and improving the process.

**1. Stricter Rules for Retail Stores:**

**Background Checks:** Stores selling SIM cards must conduct thorough background checks on their employees.

**2. Enhanced Security in Specific Regions:**

**Police Checks in Certain Areas:** In regions such as Assam, Kashmir, and the northeast, telecom companies must undergo police checks in their stores before being authorized to sell new SIM cards.

**Additional Security Measure:** This added step is implemented to bolster security measures in sensitive areas.

**Penalty for Non-Compliance:** Failure to comply with this regulation can result in fines of up to 10 lakhs for each non-compliant shop.

**3. Telecom Companies' Responsibility:**

**Oversight of Retail Stores:** Major telecommunications companies like Airtel and Jio are responsible for ensuring that the stores selling their SIM cards strictly adhere to the new regulations.

**Safeguarding the Process:** This oversight is crucial for maintaining safety and security in the distribution of SIM cards.

**4. Comprehensive Verification for All Users:**

**Detailed Verification Process:** All individuals purchasing new SIM cards or obtaining replacements due to loss or damage will undergo a comprehensive verification process.

**Ensuring Accountability:** This process mirrors the steps taken when acquiring a new SIM card, with the primary objective of restricting access to SIM cards to authorized individuals.

**India Unveils Worlds First Portable Hospital Arogya Maitri Cube**

India has unveiled the world's first portable disaster hospital, a groundbreaking facility that can be airlifted and consists of 72 cubes. This extraordinary endeavor is a component of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ambitious "Project BHISHM" (Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri), unveiled in February 2022. The project was officially inaugurated during the MedTech Expo in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The heart of this innovative disaster hospital lies in its 72 cubes, each containing an array of essential equipment and supplies. Among these are an operation theatre, a mini-ICU, ventilators, blood test equipment, an X-ray machine, a cooking station, food, water, shelter, a power generator, and more. These cubes are ingeniously designed to provide critical medical care and humanitarian aid in the wake of natural disasters and humanitarian crises. One of the most remarkable features of the Arogya Maitri Cube is its ability to handle a wide range of severe injuries, including 40 bullet injuries, 25 major burns, around 10 head injuries, long limb fractures, spinal injuries, chest injuries, and spinal fractures. This versatile disaster hospital is engineered to address the diverse medical needs of survivors in challenging conditions.

**World's tallest Nataraja statue installed at G20 summit venue**

At the venue of the G20 Summit, world leaders will be greeted by a breathtaking 27-foot-tall statue of Nataraja, Lord Shiva in his cosmic dance. This magnificent sculpture, made from an eight-metal alloy known as ashtadhatu, weighs a staggering 18 tonnes, requiring a trailer with 36 tires for transportation to Delhi. Crafted by skilled artisans from Swamimalai in Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur district, this masterpiece seamlessly blends tradition with modernity, drawing inspiration from ancient Nataraja idols.

New Launch

Bilingual

West Bengal

Test Mate

WBCS | WBPS | WBSSC  
& Others

450+ Total Tests

**Country's First Underground Power Transformer In Bengaluru Installed**

In a groundbreaking moment for the city of Bengaluru, Energy Minister KJ George inaugurated the country's inaugural underground transformer center, a significant step towards modernizing the city's power distribution infrastructure. This monumental achievement reflects Bengaluru's commitment to safety, reliability, and aesthetic enhancement of its urban landscape. Located at 15th Avenue, Malleswaram, the underground transformer center is a collaborative effort between the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). With a budget of Rs 1.98 crore, this pioneering project boasts a 500 KVA capacity transformer. Historically, underground power transformer stations have primarily been found in Western countries, where governments prioritize public convenience and safety.

**International News****Kathmandu-Kalinga Literature Festival Concludes In Lalitpur, Nepal**

The three-day long Kathmandu-Kalinga Literary Festival, a vibrant and culturally enriching event concluded in Lalitpur, Nepal. The festival, which was inaugurated by Nepal's Minister for Foreign Affairs, NP Saud, served as a platform for the exchange of culture in South Asia, while promoting literary and cultural activities in the region. This gathering of literary minds and artists from India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka showcased the diversity and richness of South Asian literature and arts. The festival offered a kaleidoscope of creative expressions, including literature, music, dance, poetry, and various other art forms. This diverse range of offerings helped foster a deeper appreciation for the cultural tapestry of South Asia and encouraged artistic collaboration among the participating countries.

**Nobel Foundation Reverses Decision to Invite Russian Ambassador**

In a recent development, the Nobel Foundation has decided to cancel its invitation to the Russian Ambassador for this year's Nobel award ceremony in Stockholm. This decision comes after significant controversy surrounding their initial invitation. In 2022, the Nobel Foundation made a notable decision not to invite Ambassadors from Russia and Belarus to the Stockholm award event due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. A similar decision was made regarding the Iranian envoy, citing Iran's crackdown on protests. Recently, the foundation announced a reversal of its policy, stating that it would once again invite Ambassadors from all countries represented in Sweden. This decision, however, sparked outrage and strong reactions from various quarters.

**Vanuatu parliament elects Sato Kilman as prime minister**

Vanuatu's parliament elected Sato Kilman as the nation's new prime minister after a court upheld a vote of no-confidence in his predecessor, who had sought closer ties with US allies amid China-US rivalry in the Pacific Islands. Kilman, a former prime minister and leader of the People's Progressive Party, was elected prime minister 27/23 in a secret ballot by lawmakers. Kilman received a total of 27 votes, while Kalsakau got 23 votes. Kilman, 65, was the deputy PM in Kalsakau's government before being removed in May. At the time Kalsakau had stated that Kilman's dismissal was for "stability of the coalition government".

**Opening of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly**

The 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly commenced with Dennis Francis taking on the role of General Assembly President. In his opening remarks, he emphasized the importance of addressing the numerous global challenges currently confronting the world. The 78th session of the General Assembly, themed 'Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress, and sustainability for all,' focuses on several critical areas. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, represented by his deputy, Amina Mohammed, delivered a message emphasizing the critical juncture the world finds itself in. He acknowledged the existence of profound global challenges but urged a proactive approach rather than succumbing to pessimism.

**African Union Becomes Permanent Member Of G20 Under India's Presidency**

During the opening session of the two-day G20 Summit, the African Union (AU) received an official invitation to join the Group of 20 largest economies (G20) as a permanent member. This momentous declaration was made by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marking a significant stride towards a more inclusive and equitable global economic landscape. Prime Minister Modi, in his opening remarks at the G20 Summit, underlined the importance of inclusivity, expressing India's proposal to grant permanent membership to the African Union within the G20. He emphasized the principle of "sabka saath" demonstrating India's commitment to ensuring that the voices of all nations, especially those in the Global South, are heard and considered on the global stage. Following Prime Minister Modi's announcement, Union of Comoros President and AU Chairperson Azali Assoumani assumed his seat as a full member of the G20.

**Modi and Biden Hold Bilateral Meeting in Delhi Ahead of G20 Summit**

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and U.S. President Joe Biden, in their second bilateral meeting in less than six months, reaffirmed their commitment to deepening the partnership between their countries. This meeting took place as Delhi hosted leaders from the Group of 20 (G20) nations, both industrialized and developing. The 29-point joint statement issued by the leaders underscored the multifaceted nature of their relationship in the evolving landscape of global alliances.

**State News****Uttarakhand CM Releases Logo, Website Of Global Investors Summit In Dehradun**

Pushkar Singh Dhami, the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, inaugurated the logo and website for the Investor Global Summit set to take place in Dehradun on December 8-9, 2023. This summit is poised to explore investment opportunities across a wide range of sectors and holds the potential to usher in a significant transformation in the state's economic landscape. Accompanying the logo unveiling was the launch of a dedicated website for the Investor Global Summit. This website serves as an information hub, offering insights into the state government's policies and detailing the various sectors ripe for investment. The website will play a pivotal role in attracting investors by providing them with comprehensive data and guidance on opportunities in Uttarakhand. It serves as a virtual gateway to the state's promising prospects, enticing potential investors to explore its untapped potential. The two-day summit, slated for December 8-9, aims to achieve an ambitious target of attracting investments worth ₹2.5 lakh crore across various sectors. CM Dhami expressed his confidence in the event's ability to draw investments into vital sectors such as tourism and wellness, agriculture and horticulture, health, and education.

**Telangana Grabs India's First Gorilla Glass Factory**

In a significant development for India's electronics manufacturing sector, Corning Inc. is gearing up to establish its cutting-edge Gorilla Glass manufacturing facility in Telangana. The proposed manufacturing unit will specialize in producing cover glass for leading players in the smartphone market. The establishment of Corning Inc.'s Gorilla Glass manufacturing facility in Telangana is poised to revolutionize India's electronics manufacturing landscape. The ambitious project is set to become a reality with a proposed investment of Rs. 934 crore. Moreover, it promises to create employment opportunities for over 800 individuals, thereby contributing significantly to the local economy. This manufacturing facility holds the potential to be a pivotal force in propelling the smartphone manufacturing ecosystem in Telangana and the wider nation. Hyderabad, the capital of Telangana, is garnering the attention of numerous electronics manufacturing giants as their preferred hub. The state has already experienced substantial investments from industry leaders such as Foxconn earlier this year. With the substantial capital infusion by Corning Inc. into Telangana, the nation is on the brink of a new era in smartphone manufacturing, one that will impact not only the state but also resonate across the entirety of India.

**Sanchi Achieves Milestone as India's First Solar City**

The World Heritage Site Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh's Raisen district has become India's first solar city. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan formally launched. It has a capacity of

3 megawatts in Nagauri near Sanchi, which will reduce annual carbon dioxide emissions by 13,747 tonnes. This is equivalent to more than 2,38,000 trees. Sanchi has become India's first solar city. The production of electricity from coal and other resources causes a negative impact on the environment. The citizens of Sanchi, the Renewable Energy Department, and all scientists have done a commendable task by resorting to solar energy option.

**Kerala To Host Inaugural Zayed Charity Marathon in 2024**

The Higher Organising Committee of the Zayed Charity Marathon has announced a groundbreaking development for India – the inaugural edition of the renowned marathon is set to take place in the vibrant state of Kerala in 2024. This event marks a significant collaboration between Kerala State authorities and the Indian community residing in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), strengthening the cultural and economic ties between the two regions. The Zayed Charity Marathon is not just a sporting event; it's a beacon of hope for charitable causes. Since its inception in 2001 in Abu Dhabi, this marathon has been a platform for raising funds and spreading humanitarian and charitable messages that echo the legacy of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Former President of the United Arab Emirates. Sheikh Zayed's philanthropic impact extended across the globe, including charitable and humanitarian institutions in the United States and Egypt, and now, it's set to reach India.

**Jharkhand Cabinet Approves Pension And OBC Status For The Transgender Community**

In a significant move aimed at fostering social inclusion and providing much-needed support, the Jharkhand government has taken a progressive step by including the transgender community in its universal pension scheme. This decision was announced during a cabinet meeting presided over by Chief Minister Hemant Soren, marking a watershed moment in the state's commitment to address the needs of its transgender population. Cabinet Secretary Vandana Dadel made the announcement, stating, "The council of ministers has approved the proposal of Mukhyamantri Rajya Samajik Suraksha Pension Yojana for transgender people under the social assistance scheme. The eligible beneficiary will receive Rs 1,000 per month as financial aid. This step acknowledges the unique challenges that transgender individuals often face, such as discrimination and marginalization, and seeks to provide them with a crucial safety net.

**West Bengal News****West Bengal Assembly Resolution On 'Poila Baisakh' As State Foundation Day**

The West Bengal assembly made a significant decision by passing a resolution to officially observe Bengali New Year's Day, known as Poila Baisakh, as the state's foundation day on April 15th. This decision comes amid controversy and



disagreements over the date chosen for this celebration. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has been a strong advocate for this change, emphasizing that the day will be observed irrespective of the approval of the state's governor. The resolution, put forth under Rule 169, proposes the observance of Poila Baisakh as 'Bangla Diwas' and seeks to declare Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's masterpiece, 'Banglar Mati, Banglar Jol' (Bengal's soil, Bengal's water), as the official state song. This historic decision was passed with a majority vote of 167 members in favor out of a total of 294 members in the House. However, not everyone in the assembly was in agreement. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with 62 MLAs in the West Bengal assembly, firmly opposed the resolution. They argue that the state's foundation day should be celebrated on June 20, a date with historical significance. On that day in 1947, MLAs from West Bengal voted for the partition of Bengal, an event that was celebrated as Bengal Day by some.

## Economy News

### GST rules for casinos, e-games notified

The Ministry of Finance has recently issued a significant notification outlining amendments to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rules pertaining to online gaming and casinos. These amendments aim to address taxation methodologies employed by online gaming companies and casinos. One of the key changes introduced by these amendments is that individuals visiting a casino are now required to pay GST on the full value of the chips they initially purchase. This means that the GST will be levied on the entire amount spent on chips at the time of purchase. Two new clauses, 31B and 31C, have been introduced in the GST rules to specify the valuation of the supply. Under these changes, any claims made by players are to be included in the total amount paid or payable, ensuring a comprehensive taxation approach.

### India Launches 'Hello UPI' and 'Bharat BillPay Connect' for Conversational Payments

In a significant move aimed at enhancing convenience and accessibility for users, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) unveiled two conversational payments initiatives during the Global Fintech Fest. These initiatives, 'Hello UPI' and 'Bharat BillPay Connect,' mark a significant step forward in facilitating seamless digital transactions through natural language conversations.

## Business News

### Bajaj Auto's Subsidiary Receives RBI Approval for NBFC Operations

Bajaj Auto's subsidiary, Bajaj Auto Consumer Finance, has received regulatory approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to commence its non-banking financial institution (NBFC) operations. This significant development allows the company to expand its financial services without accepting

public deposits. The certificate of registration from RBI, permitting Bajaj Auto Consumer Finance to operate as an NBFC, was issued on August 31, 2023, and marked a pivotal moment for the company. Bajaj Auto made the formal application to the Reserve Bank of India for an NBFC license on July 9 of the same year, seeking the regulatory green light to diversify its financial operations.

## Agreement News

### Centre Signs MoU With Adobe To Help Children Learn AI

In a significant stride towards enhancing the quality of education and nurturing creativity in classrooms across India, the Union Ministry of Education has joined forces with software giant Adobe. This groundbreaking collaboration seeks to promote creative expression and digital literacy among students and educators through the utilization of Adobe Express, an innovative application developed by Adobe. With an ambitious goal of reaching around 20 million students and upskilling 500,000 teachers, this partnership aims to revolutionize the education landscape in India. Under this program, Adobe is committed to providing free access to Adobe Express Premium for schools nationwide. This access will not only empower students to unleash their creativity but also offer a user-friendly platform for educators to foster digital literacy and creative skills among their students. Furthermore, Adobe will facilitate professional development opportunities for 500,000 educators. These training programs will equip educators with the skills to effectively use Adobe Express for creating digital learning content. Those who successfully complete the training will be awarded the prestigious Adobe Creative Educators certification, a recognition of their dedication to enhancing the learning experience for their students.

### MoU Signed Between Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya Vadodara And Airbus In New Delhi

Indian Railways' Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV) Vadodara and Airbus, a global aviation giant, have recently embarked on a strategic collaboration aimed at fortifying the Indian aviation sector. This partnership, sealed through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed at Rail Bhawan, New Delhi, signifies a significant milestone in fostering industry-academia alliances to propel India's aviation industry to new heights. The MoU was signed in the presence of Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of Railways, Communications, Electronics, and IT, who also serves as the First Chancellor of Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya. Accompanying him were Ms. Jaya Varma Sinha, the Chairperson and CEO of the Railway Board, and other senior officials. This collaboration follows Airbus' recent partnership with Tata to establish a C295 aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodara, Gujarat, marking a renewed commitment to bolstering India's aerospace sector.

## Appointment News

**Dr. Vasudha Gupta Assumes Charge As Principal DG Of Akashvani**

Dr. Vasudha Gupta, a seasoned Senior Indian Information Service officer, has taken charge as the Principal Director General of Akashvani and News Services Division. This appointment comes after her commendable tenure as Director General at Akashvani, where she played a pivotal role in revitalizing the iconic broadcasting institution. With over 33 years of dedicated service in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, including her tenure as Director General of the Press Information Bureau (PIB), Dr. Vasudha Gupta brings a wealth of experience and expertise to her new role. Dr. Vasudha Gupta holds a Ph.D. in Finance from the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. Over the past year, Dr. Gupta has been instrumental in the rejuvenation of Akashvani. Her vision and leadership have played a pivotal role in transforming the institution, making it more dynamic and in tune with the evolving media landscape. Her academic achievements have contributed to her ability to introduce social media platforms in regional languages through Akashvani, a significant step in making information more accessible to diverse audiences.

**Uday Kotak Resigns As Kotak Mahindra Bank MD & CEO, Dipak Gupta Takes Interim Charge**

Uday Kotak has formally resigned from his position as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Kotak Mahindra Bank, with the change taking effect from September 1st, 2023. This significant development was communicated by the bank to the exchanges on September 2, marking the end of an era in Indian banking. Mr. Kotak, however, will continue to play a vital role as a non-executive director within the organization until his tenure concludes on December 31, 2023. To ensure a seamless transition, Dipak Gupta, the joint managing director of Kotak Mahindra Bank, will take on the responsibilities of the Managing Director and CEO on an interim basis. This transition is subject to approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the members of the bank. It reflects the bank's commitment to maintaining stability and continuity in its leadership.

**Cognizant India MD Rajesh Nambiar appointed as Nasscom Chairperson**

Indian IT and tech trade body Nasscom announced the appointment of Rajesh Nambiar, Chairman and Managing Director, Cognizant India, as its new Chairperson. Nambiar is succeeding Anant Maheshwari, former President, Microsoft India as the new Chairperson of the trade body. Nambiar takes on the new role from his previous role as Vice Chairperson succeeding Anant Maheshwari, Former President, of Microsoft India. Nambiar along with President Debjani Ghosh, will continue to work with the nasscom Executive Council, industry, and the government in strengthening India's position as a global technology hub while navigating the current volatile macro environment.

**Lokesh Suji elected to IESF membership committee for three-year term**

The General Body of the International Esports Federation (IESF) has elected Lokesh Suji, director, the Esports Federation of India (ESFI) and vice-president, the Asian Esports Federation, to its membership committee on a three-year term. The election marks the first time that an Indian has become a part of the membership committee of the International Esports Federation. The elections for Suji's appointment were conducted during the recent Ordinary General Meeting (OGM) of the IESF on August 28 in Iasi, Romania, where out of the 70 voting and present members, a majority of 42 member countries voted in favour of his selection. As part of the membership committee, he will now leverage his experience and expertise to ensure the execution of the process, contributing to a future for esports within the IESF.

**Shyam Sunder Gupta Takes Charge As Central Railway's Principal Chief Operations Manager**

Shyam Sunder Gupta took over as the Principal Chief Operations Manager of Central Railway on Tuesday, September 5, 2023. His appointment follows the superannuation of Mukul Jain, who retired from the position on August 31, 2023. Shyam Sunder Gupta's illustrious career in the railway services and his extensive experience make him a valuable addition to this pivotal role. Shyam Sunder Gupta, a 1992 batch officer of the Indian Railway Traffic Service, brings with him a wealth of experience spanning various regions and responsibilities within the Indian Railways. Over the years, he has held several key positions across different railway divisions, showcasing his competence and dedication to the service. During his tenure, he has worked on Western Railway, South Central Railway, South East Central Railway, and Central Railway in various capacities. His diverse roles have included serving as the Chief Freight Transportation Manager for Central Railway, Chief Passenger Transportation Manager for Central & Western Railway, Chief Commercial Manager (Freight Marketing) for Central Railway, Chief Transportation Planning Manager for Central Railway, and Chief Public Relations Officer for Western Railway.

New Launch

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**Women's fashion brand W roped Anushka Sharma as Brand Ambassador**

Women's fashion brand W on-boarded Anushka Sharma as its brand ambassador. With this partnership, the brand prepares to launch its high-decibel festive campaign that beautifully merges the warmth of festivities with the spirit of modernity. The campaign talks about every festival having a story that is synonymous with the story of women. It captures the essence of women being the centre of every celebration, thereby urging women to cherish their individuality and 'Celebrate your story'. The brand's ideology resonates with my beliefs and values. The brand the essence of every woman, her unique story, her convictions, her beliefs, her challenges and her wins. The specially curated Festive Collection by W includes its widest range of Anarkalis, Festive sets, dresses and lots more. It boasts of an exquisite array of fabrics, carefully selected to enhance the festive experience. From cotton lurex sets adorned with metallic gota trims to velvety textures with matte sequins, the collection offers a tactile journey through the opulence of the festive season.

**Banking News**

**Record Bank Credit Outstanding to Real Estate Reaches Rs 28 Trillion in July: RBI**

In July 2023, India witnessed a significant surge in bank credit outstanding to the real estate sector, reaching an all-time high of Rs 28 trillion, as per data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). This impressive growth was driven by both housing and commercial real estate segments, with annual increases of approximately 37.4% and 38.1%, respectively. This surge indicates a robust revival in demand across the real estate sector, despite challenges such as rising interest rates and property prices. Let's delve deeper into the details. Housing credit outstanding saw a remarkable 37.4% annual growth, surpassing Rs 24.28 lakh crore. Credit outstanding for commercial real estate soared by 38.1% to reach Rs 4.07 lakh crore.

**BIS and RBI Announce G20 TechSprint 2023 Winners**

The Bank for International Settlements (BIS) and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have recently unveiled the winners of the G20 TechSprint 2023 challenge in a prestigious award ceremony held in Mumbai. This initiative, launched by the RBI last May under India's G20 presidency, sought to foster innovative solutions that enhance cross-border payments.

Problem Statement #1: Combating Financial Crimes

Winner: Team Secretarium Ltd. (UK)

Solution: Transaction Monitoring and Privacy Protection

Utilized secure privacy technology to combat money laundering, financing of terrorism, tax evasion, and sanctions evasion.

Emphasized protecting anonymity and privacy in financial transactions.

Problem Statement #2: Enhancing Liquidity in Cross-Border Payments

Winner: Team Millicent Labs (UK)

Solution: Hybrid Decentralized Exchange for CBDCs

Introduced a hybrid decentralized exchange for Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs).

Included automated market makers and traditional order books to optimize liquidity and minimize volatility risks.

Problem Statement #3: Developing Multilateral CBDC Platforms

Winner: Team Knox Networks (US)

Solution: Multilateral CBDC based on File-Based Digital Assets (FBDAs)

Proposed a multilateral CBDC solution using File-Based Digital Assets (FBDAs).

Addressed the need for efficient cross-border CBDC platforms.

**Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launches the Malaviya Mission**

Dharmendra Pradhan, the Union Minister for Education, introduced the Malaviya Mission – Teacher Training Program at Kaushal Bhawan in New Delhi as a crucial step in improving the standard of education in India. This ambitious project, spearheaded by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in partnership with the Ministry of Education, seeks to transform faculty capacity building and teacher preparation programs across the country's higher education institutions. One of the primary objectives of the Malaviya Mission is to provide specialized and tailored training programs for teachers. In a symbolic gesture, Minister Pradhan announced the renaming of Human Resource Development Centres (HRDCs) as Madan Mohan Malaviya Teachers' Training Centres. This renaming not only pays tribute to the renowned educationist Madan Mohan Malaviya but also underscores the program's commitment to elevating the status of teacher training in India.

**SBI Card unveils additional features on its super-premium card 'AURUM'**

SBI Card, India's largest credit card issuer, launched new features of its super-premium card 'AURUM', targeted at the premium section of society, such as high-net-worth individuals. With the enhancements, AURUM cardholders will be able to avail benefits worth up to Rs 2 lakh annually, based on their spending. The card offers unlimited international lounge access to cardholders, as well as four international lounge visits for accompanying guests. In addition, the card also offers a one-year Club Marriott membership as a welcome gift.

**SBI Card Launches 'SimplySAVE Merchant SBI Card' To Provide MSMEs With Short-Term Credit**

SBI Card, India's largest pure-play credit card issuer, has introduced the 'SimplySAVE Merchant SBI Card', a specialized credit card tailored for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). This new card is designed to address the short-term credit needs of MSME merchants while providing them with a range of exclusive benefits. The official unveiling of the SimplySAVE Merchant SBI Card took place at the Global Fintech Fest in Mumbai, with Mr. Dinesh Khara, Chairman of



State Bank of India, doing the honors. The launch of the SimplySAVE Merchant SBI Card serves to empower the broader MSME sector by offering them interest-free short-term credit. Considering the significant role played by MSMEs in fostering economic growth and job creation, it becomes imperative to streamline their access to formal credit in a more convenient and prompt fashion.

**SBI Unveils Nation First Transit Card For Digital Fare Payments**

State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender, has taken a significant step in enhancing the commuting experience and promoting digital payment adoption with the launch of the 'Nation First Transit Card.' This innovative card is designed to facilitate seamless and convenient customer commuting experiences, offering easy digital ticketing fare payments across various modes of transportation, such as metro, buses, water ferries, parking, and more, all through a single card. Additionally, the card can also be used for making retail and e-commerce payments. Dinesh Kumar Khara, Chairman of SBI, emphasized that the Nation First Transit Card, powered by RuPay and National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) technology, has the potential to revolutionize the commuting experience for millions of Indians. The card is not just a financial tool but also a symbol of SBI's commitment to the growth and development of the nation.

**Science & Technology News**

**Hyderabad Firm Grene Robotics Unveils India's First AI-Powered Anti-Drone System - Indrajaaal**

In a remarkable feat of innovation and technological prowess, Hyderabad-based private sector firm Grene Robotics has introduced Indrajaaal, world's only autonomous wide area, counter-unmanned aircraft system (C-UAS). This state-of-the-art system is touted as capable of safeguarding against micro, mini, small, large, and extra-large drones, signaling a significant advancement in Indian defense technology. Grene Robotics has spared no expense or effort, utilizing its own financial resources and scientific expertise to create live demonstrations of Indrajaaal for government officials and tri-services officers. This commitment to self-reliance in defense technology demonstrates the firm's dedication to bolstering India's indigenous capabilities.

**One Week One Lab programme of CSIR to be organised from 11th to 16th September 2023**

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is all set to host its annual "One Week One Lab" programme, an exciting event where each of its 37 cutting-edge laboratories situated across the nation will unveil their remarkable research outcomes and accomplishments. The Science and Technology Ministry is extending a warm invitation to the public, providing them with a unique opportunity to explore the inner workings of CSIR's various departments and experience firsthand its exceptional academic and research initiatives.

**Japan launches 'moon sniper' lunar lander SLIM into space**

Japan has launched "moon sniper" its lunar exploration spacecraft aboard a homegrown H-IIA rocket, clearing a path to become the world's fifth country to land on the moon early next year. Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) said the rocket took off from Tanegashima Space Center in southern Japan as planned and successfully released the Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM). Japan aims to land SLIM within 100 metres of its target site on the lunar surface. The \$100-million mission is expected to reach the moon by February. The launch comes two weeks after India became the fourth nation to successfully land a spacecraft on the moon with its Chandrayaan-3 mission to the unexplored lunar south pole. Two earlier lunar landing attempts by Japan failed in the last year.

**Schemes and Committees News**

**Why Poshan Abhiyan in News?**

September is designated as National Nutrition Month in India, also known as Rashtriya POSHAN Maah or the National Nutrition Mission. The main goal of this initiative is to combat undernutrition among children under six years old, pregnant women, and lactating mothers. POSHAN Abhiyan is now in its sixth year, having been launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in March 2018. Let's take a look at how different regions across India have begun celebrating Nutrition Month. Poshan Abhiyaan was launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 8th March, 2018 in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan. The focus of Abhiyaan is to lay emphasis on nutritional status of adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children from 0-6 years age. The Abhiyaan is being implemented in all districts of Haryana. Nuh and Panipat districts were selected for Phase-I. For Phase-II, 10 districts, namely Kaithal, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Bhiwani, Yamuna Nagar, Gurugram, Palwal, Rohtak, Sirsa and Sonapat were selected. Remaining districts are covered in the Phase III.

**Prayagraj Police Launches 'Savera' Scheme To Assist Senior Citizens**

The Prayagraj police have taken a proactive step towards ensuring the safety and well-being of senior citizens in their community. They have recently launched the 'Savera' scheme, aimed at offering essential services during health and other emergencies to senior citizens residing in seven districts within the Prayagraj zone. This initiative has garnered significant attention and participation, with over 700 senior citizens registering in just the past three days. Under the 'Savera' scheme, the Prayagraj police are meticulously maintaining a comprehensive record of individuals aged 60 and above. These records are accessible through a dedicated helpline number, 112, ensuring a quick and efficient response in times of need. One of the primary responsibilities of the police personnel involved in this scheme is to conduct regular safety checks at the homes of registered senior citizens. These checks are crucial in guaranteeing the safety and well-being of elderly individuals who might otherwise be vulnerable.

## Indian Government Launches G20 India Mobile App for Visitors

In preparation for the upcoming G20 Summit in Delhi, the Indian government has unveiled the G20 India mobile app, a digital tool designed to facilitate interaction and provide valuable information for all visitors, including ministers. This innovative app, created by the Ministry of External Affairs, aims to enhance the Summit experience for participants and attendees. In a recent announcement by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, ministers were urged to download the app, emphasizing its role in fostering communication with foreign delegates.

## Summits & Conference News

### 43rd ASEAN Summit Begins In Jakarta Today

President Joko Widodo and First Lady Iriana extended a warm welcome to the heads of state and government participating in the 43rd summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Jakarta. The 43rd ASEAN Summit, hosted by Indonesia and occurring from September 5th to 7th, saw esteemed delegates gathering at the Plenary Hall of the Jakarta Convention Center, the summit's main venue. Indonesia, as the host of the summit and the 2023 chair of ASEAN, demonstrated its commitment to broadening the summit's horizons by inviting President of Bangladesh Mohammed Shahabuddin, who also serves as Chairman of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and Cook Islands PM Mark Brown, Chairman of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). This global engagement highlights the importance of ASEAN as a regional powerhouse with far-reaching implications.

### The 10th Meeting Of The Ministers Of Law And Justice Of SCO Countries Took Place

The 10th meeting of the Ministers of Law and Justice of SCO countries was convened via video conferencing, where several key initiatives and cooperative efforts were discussed. During this meeting, India reaffirmed its commitment to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) by extending support to member countries in enhancing their legal and judicial capabilities. The meeting commenced in a cordial atmosphere with a message from Chinese President Xi Jinping, who emphasized the importance of cooperation and understanding among SCO members. President Xi called for the realization of SCO's objectives and visions, aiming to optimize the organization's contribution to the holistic development of the region. Indian Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal reiterated India's commitment to the SCO charter, which is based on principles such as mutual trust, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and mutual benefit. He cited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of India as a "universal friend" and highlighted the importance of trust in government policies and practices.

## Prime Minister Modi Participated in the 20th ASEAN-India Summit and 18th East Asia Summit (EAS)

Prime Minister Modi participated in the 20th ASEAN-India Summit and engaged in comprehensive discussions with ASEAN partners to reinforce the ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. He reaffirmed the central role of ASEAN in the Indo-Pacific and highlighted the alignment between India's Indo-Pacific Ocean's Initiative (IPOI) and ASEAN's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). Emphasis was placed on the timely review of ASEAN-India FTA (AITIGA).

## Awards & Honors News

### Indian-American physician Dr Siddhartha Mukherjee in UK's top non-fiction prize longlist

A book by Indian-American cancer physician and researcher Dr Siddhartha Mukherjee has been longlisted for the prestigious 50,000 pound Baillie Gifford Prize for Non-Fiction in London. 'The Song of the Cell: An Exploration of Medicine and the New Human', which is among the 13-book longlist announced, highlights how cellular research has revolutionised medicine, enabling the treatment of life-altering diseases including Alzheimer's and AIDS. The judging panel described the 53-year-old Rhodes scholar's work as his "most spectacular book yet". His other works include, 'The Gene: An Intimate History', which was a #1 New York Times bestseller, and 'The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer', which won the 2011 Pulitzer Prize in general nonfiction. An Associate Professor of medicine at Columbia University, Mukherjee graduated from Stanford University, University of Oxford, and Harvard Medical School. He has published articles in many journals, including Nature, The New England Journal of Medicine, Cell, The New York Times and The New Yorker.

## Important Dates News

### National Teachers' Day 2023: Date, History & Significance

National Teachers' Day in India is celebrated on September 5th every year. It is a day to honor and celebrate the contributions of teachers to society. The day is also observed as a tribute to the memory of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the second President of India from 1962 to 1967. Dr. Radhakrishnan was a scholar, philosopher, and teacher. He was also a strong advocate for education and believed that teachers played a vital role in shaping the future of the nation. In 1962, when his students asked him to celebrate his birthday, he requested that they instead observe September 5th as Teachers' Day. This year National Teacher's Day 2023 is celebrated on Tuesday. In 1962, when Dr. S Radhakrishnan assumed office as the President of India his students approached him seeking permission to celebrate September 5 as a special day. Instead, Dr. Radhakrishnan asked his students to observe the date as Teacher's Day in a bid to acknowledge the contribution of teachers to society. Globally, World Teachers Day is observed on October 5. It is an initiative led by organisations such as UNESCO, UNICEF and ILO.



**International Day of Police Cooperation 2023: Date, History and Significance**

The International Day of Police Cooperation is a United Nations observance held annually on September 7. It was created to commemorate the founding of Interpol and highlight the role of law enforcement from around the globe in maintaining peace, security, and justice. For most of human history, cooperation among law enforcement in different countries was organized largely on a case to case basis. The world's first initiative for international law enforcement cooperation was the Police Union of German States, established in 1851. It brought together secret police forces from various German-speaking countries. The United Nations General Assembly designated September 7 as the International Day of Police Cooperation during its 77th session in December 2022. The inaugural celebration took place on September 7, 2023, coinciding with the 100th founding anniversary of Interpol. It focused on the crucial role of women in policing.

**International Literacy Day 2023: Date, Theme, History and Significance**

International Literacy Day is celebrated on September 8 every year to promote the importance of literacy for dignity and human rights, and a literate and sustainable society. The day is celebrated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) at the global, regional, country, and local levels across the world. The theme 'Promoting literacy for a world in transition: Building the foundation for sustainable and peaceful societies'. Under this theme, Literacy Day 2023 will be celebrated at the global, regional, country, and local levels across the world. At the global level, a conference will be organized in person and online on Friday, 8 September 2023, in Paris, France. This global celebration will include the award ceremony of the UNESCO International Literacy Prizes to announce this year's outstanding prizewinning programmes.

**International Day to Protect Education from Attack 2023**

The International Day to Protect Education from Attack is an international observance established by the United Nations General Assembly on September 9 every year. It was established in response to the growing number of attacks on schools and educational institutions around the world. These attacks can take many forms, including shelling, bombing, and occupation. They can also include the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. On May 28, 2020, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 74/275, establishing September 9 as the International Day to Protect Education from Attack. Recognizing the importance of raising awareness of the dire need to preserve education and protect it from attack, the Resolution designates UNESCO and UNICEF to serve as co-facilitators for the yearly observance of this Day and calls upon stakeholders to keep this issue at the top of the international agenda and duly act to alleviate the plight of students affected by armed conflicts.

**Sports News**

**Max Verstappen wins Italian Grand Prix 2023**

Max Verstappen has won the Italian Grand Prix and sets a new record for the most consecutive wins in Formula 1 history with 10. Sergio Perez made it a Red Bull 1-2 after he got ahead of Carlos Sainz following a fierce battle with the Ferrari driver in the closing stages. With Leclerc fourth, George Russell was fifth despite being issued a five-second time penalty for gaining an advantage off the track. Lewis Hamilton recovered to sixth place on the road and also overcame a five-second punishment for making contact with McLaren's Oscar Piastri. Alexander Albon was seventh, fending off Lando Norris who was stuck in the rear mirrors of the Williams driver for much of the Grand Prix. Fernando Alonso was ninth, while Valtteri Bottas took Alfa Romeo's first points since Canada.

Pos.	Driver	Team	Time
1.	Max Verstappen	Red Bull	LAP 51
2.	Sergio Pérez	Red Bull	+6.064
3.	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	+11.193
4.	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	+11.377
5.	George Russell	Mercedes	+23.028
6.	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	+42.679
7.	Alexander Albon	Williams	+45.106
8.	Lando Norris	McLaren	+45.449
9.	Fernando Alonso	Aston Martin	+46.294
10.	Valtteri Bottas	Alfa Romeo	+64.056

**McGahey to become first transgender to play international cricket**

For the first time in international cricket, a transgender woman player will feature in ICC-related tournaments. Danielle McGahey, 29, is set to become the first transgender woman player to play in international cricket. The right-hand batter from Australia, who moved to Canada in 2020, had fulfilled the eligibility criteria for male-to-female (MTF) transition, per ICC. McGahey is named in Canada's squad for the Women's T20 Americas Qualifier, the pathway tournament to the T20 World Cup 2024. According to BBC Sport, the first to break this news, McGahey socially transitioned from male to female three years ago in 2020 before undergoing a medical transition in 2021. Per an ICC statement released on Thursday, Danielle McGahey is eligible to feature in women's international cricket after ticking all the requirements needed to participate.

**Divya Deshmukh Emerges Winner Of 2023 Tata Steel Chess India Women's Rapid Tournament**

Divya Deshmukh, a 17-year-old Chess Woman Grandmaster hailing from Nagpur, Maharashtra, India clinched victory in the women's category of the rapid section at the Tata Steel Chess India tournament. She dominated the competition by securing victories in all three rounds of the tournament,

which took place at the National Library in Kolkata on September 1, 2023. Deshmukh secured the top position with a remarkable score of 7 points, while the reigning world champion, Ju Wenjun of China, closely followed with 6.5 points. Russia's Polina Shuvalova finished third with a score of 5.5 points. Divya Deshmukh embarked on her remarkable journey in the realm of chess through an unforeseen turn of events. Her entry into the prestigious Tata Steel Chess India tournament was a result of a last-minute invitation, prompted by the withdrawal of R. Vaishali. Initially starting as the 10th seed among the 10 participants in the women's rapid section, Divya's ascent to the pinnacle of the Tata Steel Chess India tournament was nothing less than astonishing.

### ICC, IndusInd To Ink Multi-Year Sponsorship Deal

IndusInd Bank, a leading financial institution in India, has announced a significant multi-year sponsorship deal with the International Cricket Council (ICC). The partnership is set to commence with the highly anticipated Men's Cricket World Cup, which is scheduled to begin on October 5th, showcasing the world's best cricketing talent on the Indian subcontinent. The multi-year sponsorship agreement between IndusInd Bank and the ICC is valued at \$20-\$24 million (approximately Rs 160-200 crore). This substantial financial commitment underscores the bank's dedication to supporting the sport of cricket and its global reach through this prestigious partnership. In addition to IndusInd Bank's exciting announcement, Mastercard has also stepped up to become a top-tier sponsor for the upcoming ICC Cricket World Cup 2023. This move solidifies Mastercard's commitment to the world of cricket and showcases the sport's widespread appeal and global significance.

### Amul is official sponsor of Indian contingent at Hangzhou Asian Games

Amul is named as the official sponsor of the Indian Contingent for the 19th Asian Games 2022 to be held in Hangzhou, China from September 23 to October 8, 2023. As part of this association, Amul will use the integrated logo in its communication to celebrate the efforts of the sportsperson. Amul has partnered with Indian sportspersons through the Indian Olympic Association since the London 2012 Olympics for all Indian contingent to Olympics, Commonwealth Games and Asian Games and we are pleased to further strengthen our decade long relationship.

### Nattaya Boochatham becomes 1st bowler from associate nation to pick up 100 Wickets in T20s

Thailand women's cricket team's star spinner Nattaya Boochatham created history with her three wickets against Kuwait in the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Asia Region Qualifier, September 4. Nattaya completed 100 wickets in T20Is to become the first-ever cricketer, male or female, to reach the 100-wicket mark in international cricket. The 36-year-old spin all-rounder now has taken 101 wickets in 73 ODI matches at an average of 9.96 and becomes the first-ever cricketer to take 100 wickets at a bowling average below 10.

She becomes the only 11th cricketer in the world with 100 T20I wickets in women's cricket but possesses the best bowling average in the list. She will join the current world no.1 bowler Sophie Ecclestone's 102 wickets tally if she picks one wicket in Thailand's next game against Hong Kong on September 6.

### Street 20: Street Child Cricket World Cup To Be Held In Chennai From Sept 22

For the very first time, Chennai will be the host city for "Street 20," an incredibly heartwarming cricket tournament exclusively dedicated to street children, aiming to captivate the hearts of both cricket enthusiasts and advocates for children's rights alike. Street 20 is a remarkable initiative that brings together street children from 15 countries, transcending borders and backgrounds. Children hailing from the United Kingdom, Brazil, Hungary, Mexico, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, and more will take part in this extraordinary tournament. What makes this event even more special is that it precedes the ICC World Cup Cricket in India, making it a perfect prelude to the grandest cricketing spectacle on the planet. The defending champions of the Street Child Cricket World Cup, Team India, will be the star attraction of Street 20. This dynamic group of young cricketers has already etched their names in history. In 2019, at the inaugural tournament held in London, Indian children emerged victorious, showcasing their talent and determination to the world.

### Goa Governor Launches 'Mashaal' For 37th National Games

Governor of Goa, Shri. P.S. Sreedharan Pillai, officially introduced the Mashaal (torch) to mark the commencement of the 37th National Games. This splendid event was organized by the Department of Sports and Youth Affairs, in collaboration with the Sports Authority of Goa, at the Durbar Hall in Raj Bhavan, Donapaula. The ceremony was graced by the esteemed presence of Dr. Pramod Sawant, the Chief Minister, Shri. Govind Gaude, the Minister for Sports & Youth Affairs, Shri. Shripad Naik, the Minister of State for Tourism, and several other distinguished guests. Governor Pillai also revealed the National Games' Anthem (theme song), which featured the iconic voice of the legendary actor, Amitabh Bachchan. His participation added an element of grandeur and distinction to the occasion. What sets this Anthem apart is its incorporation of the traditional Goan instrument, the Ghumat, and the collaboration of Goan vocalists alongside other gifted artists.

## Obituaries News

### Former Zimbabwe captain Heath Streak Passes Away

Zimbabwe's former cricket captain Heath Streak has passed away at the age of 49, following a long battle with colon and liver cancer. He was Born in Bulawayo, Streak, a cricketing legend, was particularly known for his prowess as a fast bowler. He held the distinction of being Zimbabwe's all-time leading wicket-taker in Test cricket, having taken 216 wickets

at an average of 28.14. Additionally, he scored 1990 runs at an average of 22.35 in Test matches. In One Day Internationals (ODIs), Streak claimed 239 wickets at an average of 29.82 and scored 2,943 runs at 28.29.

### **Piloo Reporter, The First Among Neutral Umpires, Passes Away**

Piloo Reporter, a former international umpire, passed away on September 3 at a Thane hospital, Mumbai. He was 84 years old and had been dealing with cerebral contusions, leading to an extended period of bedridden illness. In his long and illustrious career spanning 28 years, Piloo Reporter known for his jovial nature and vigorous style of signaling boundaries, stood in 14 Tests and 22 ODIs. His unique way of signaling boundaries earned him the affectionate nickname "PD" in the cricketing fraternity. Reporter's remarkable skills as an umpire came into the spotlight when he stood in seven matches during the 1992 Cricket World Cup held in Australia and New Zealand. His contributions to the game were celebrated not only in India but on the international stage as well. Piloo Reporter, along with another Indian umpire, V K Ramaswamy, achieved a historic milestone in 1986 when they became the first pair of neutral umpires in the world since 1912. This groundbreaking move came during the Pakistan versus West Indies series in Pakistan, where they officiated to end the stigma of biased umpiring. This event eventually led to the ICC introducing one neutral umpire in Tests from 1992 onwards.

### **ISRO scientist N Valarmathi, voice behind Chandrayaan-3 countdown, passes away**

N Valarmathi, an Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientist, who lent her voice to countdowns for rocket launches in Sriharikota, died after a cardiac arrest. She was last heard during the countdown announcement for the launch of Chandrayaan-3 that made a historic landing on the Moon. Chandrayaan-3 was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota on July 14. Chandrayaan 3 was her final countdown announcement. Valarmathi was a scientist at the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for over 30 years. She was the voice behind the countdowns for many ISRO launches, including the historic Chandrayaan-3 mission, which made a soft landing on the Moon in July 2023. Her calm and reassuring voice was a familiar sound to millions of Indians who tuned in to watch the ISRO launches.

### **SPG Chief Arun Kumar Sinha, Responsible For PM Modi's Protection, Passes Away**

Arun Kumar Sinha, who served as the Director of the Special Protection Group (SPG), has passed away at the age of 61 while undergoing treatment at a hospital in Gurugram, where he had been receiving medical care for some time. Sinha held a pivotal role in the security apparatus of the country, as he was responsible for providing proximate security to the Prime Minister of India. This significant duty underscores the magnitude of his contributions to the nation's security. Arun Kumar Sinha, an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer from the

1987 Kerala cadre, had a distinguished career spanning multiple decades. His journey in the Special Protection Group (SPG) began in March 2016, when he assumed the role of its 12th director. His appointment was made on a contractual basis, lasting until May 31, 2024, at the rank and compensation level of director general of police. On May 31, he was granted a one-year extension in service, underscoring his unwavering commitment to his responsibilities. This tenure allowed him to lead the SPG with utmost dedication and professionalism.

### **Hindustani vocalist Malini Rajurkar passes away at 82**

Noted Hindustani classical vocalist Malini Rajurkar, who epitomised simplicity and depth, passed away in a Hyderabad hospital. She was 82 and had been suffering from age-related ailments. She has performed in major music festivals in India, including Gunidas Sammelan (Mumbai), Tansen Samaroh (Gwalior), Sawai Gandharva Festival (Pune), and Shankar Lal Festival (Delhi). She is noted especially for her command over the Tappa and the Tarana genre. Malini Rajurkar was born in Ajmer in Rajasthan in 1941. She studied music from the Ajmer Music College, under the guidance of Govindrao Rajurkar and his nephew Vasantrao Rajurkar, who was to become her future husband. She was an exponent of Gwalior gharana and one of the foremost proponents of 'khyal' and 'tappa' genre.

## Defence News

### **Indian Air Force And Drone Federation Of India To Co-host Bharat Drone Shakti 2023**

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is collaborating with the Drone Federation of India to co-host 'Bharat Drone Shakti 2023.' This upcoming event, scheduled for the 25th and 26th of September 2023, will take place at the IAF's airbase in Hindan (Ghaziabad). It is anticipated to be a pioneering exhibition highlighting the prowess of the Indian drone industry, with more than 50 live aerial demonstrations. 'Bharat Drone Shakti 2023' is set to impress attendees with a diverse array of live aerial demonstrations. The event will encompass a wide range of drone applications, including survey drones, agriculture drones, fire suppression drones, tactical surveillance drones, heavy-lift logistics drones, loitering munition systems, drone swarms, and counter-drone solutions. This comprehensive exhibition will underscore the versatility and innovation present within the Indian drone sector.

### **INS Sumedha Has Arrived In Egypt To Participate In 'Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23'**

Indian Navy's INS Sumedha arrived at Port Alexandria, Egypt to participate in 'Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23'. This edition of the multinational Tri-Services military exercise will see participation from 34 countries. It is the largest ever joint military exercise in the Middle East and North Africa region. This joint military exercise, hosted in Egypt, marks a historic milestone for the Indian Navy and strengthens India's



diplomatic and strategic ties with partner nations. The Harbour Phase involves wide-ranging activities such as cross-deck visits, professional exchanges, sports fixtures and interactions for planning and conduct of the Sea Phase. This Phase of the Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23 is a crucial starting point where participating nations engage in a variety of activities to foster cooperation and understanding. Cross-deck visits and professional exchanges allow naval personnel to learn from one another, sharing expertise and best practices. Additionally, sports fixtures and interactions promote camaraderie among the servicemen and women.

**21st EDITION OF INDIA FRANCE BILATERAL NAVAL EXERCISE 'VARUNA' - 2023**

The Indian and French Navies, steeped in rich maritime traditions and strategic cooperation, recently concluded the Phase II of the 21st edition of the Varuna naval exercise, Varuna-23. Held in the Arabian Sea, this exercise exemplifies the commitment of both nations to enhance their warfighting capabilities, improve interoperability, and promote peace, security, and stability in the region. The Varuna-23 exercise spanned three days and saw the active participation of guided missile frigates, a tanker, Maritime Patrol Aircraft, and integral helicopters from both the Indian and French Navies. This robust collaboration showcased joint operations, underway replenishment, and various tactical maneuvers designed to sharpen the skills of both navies. It is through exercises like Varuna-23 that these naval forces hone their capabilities to respond effectively to regional and global security challenges. The roots of the Varuna naval exercise trace back to 1993 when Indian and French naval forces initiated their bilateral engagement. Over the years, this exercise has evolved significantly, earning the moniker 'Varuna' in 2001. Today, Varuna stands as a testament to the enduring India-France strategic relationship.

**Books & Authors News**

**Fire on the Ganges Life among the Dead in Banaras by Radhika Iyengar**

Radhika Iyengar is the author of the book 'Fire on the Ganges: Life Among the Dead in Banaras,' released by HarperCollins. The book explores the city of Banaras (also known as Varanasi) in India, particularly its relationship with death and the afterlife. Fire on the Ganges is the first attempt to chronicle the everyday realities of the Doms in Banaras. Through their tales of struggle and survival, betrayal and love, it tells the at-times-heartbreaking, at-times-exhilarating story of a community struggling to find a place beyond that accorded to it by ancient tradition. Fire on the Ganges is the first attempt to chronicle the everyday realities of the Doms in Banaras. It plunges into Banaras's historical past, while narrowing its lens on a few spirited characters from the Dom community. Radhika Iyengar is an award-winning journalist with a Master's degree in journalism from Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, New York.

**A book on UP CM Yogi Adityanath creates history with 67 launches**

The recently launched graphic novel, 'Ajay to Yogi Adityanath,' has made history by achieving the highest number of book launches, earning it a place in the Asia Book of Records. This remarkable novel, penned by renowned author Shantanu Gupta, delves into the life of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, tracing his journey from humble beginnings to the pinnacle of political leadership. 'Ajay to Yogi Adityanath' is not just a graphic novel; it's a historical record of a remarkable journey. Yogi Adityanath's life story, as vividly depicted by Shantanu Gupta, serves as an inspiration for countless individuals striving to overcome obstacles and make a significant impact on society. This graphic novel not only breaks records but also sheds light on the incredible journey of a man who rose from the hinterlands of Uttarakhand to lead India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh. This novel has been introduced in 29 locations within Uttar Pradesh and seven locations in National Capital Region (NCR). An inaugural event marked its simultaneous release on June 5, 2023, coinciding with the 51st birthday of Chief Minister Yogi, at more than 51 venues across 25 districts in Uttar Pradesh. 'Ajay to Yogi Adityanath' is actually the voyage of Ajay Singh Bisht, a young boy born in the hinterland of Uttarakhand along with six other siblings. His father Anand Singh Bisht was a junior forest officer and his mother Savitri Devi was a housewife.

**Miscellaneous News**

**Salem Sago Gets GI Tag**

Salem district in the state of Tamil Nadu has gained acclaim for its sago production, which is widely recognized as Sabudana. Salem Sago, locally known as Javvarisi, is derived from the wet starch powder extracted from tapioca roots. Indian tapioca roots are known to contain approximately 30-35% starch content. Sago production has been a cornerstone of Salem's economic development since 1967. Currently, over 80% of sago in India is produced in the Salem region, with a significant portion marketed through Sagoserve. The request for a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for Salem Sago (Javvarisi) was filed by the Salem Starch and Sago Manufacturers Service Industrial Co-operative Society Limited, commonly known as Sagoserve. The GI tag can significantly boost business for farmers in the Salem region and the over-400 sago and starch units in areas like Salem, Erode, Nammakal, and Dharmapuri. These regions have a long-standing tradition of sago production.

**Odisha: GI Tags For Rayagada Shawls And Koraput's Kala Jeera Rice**

In a significant development for the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) Dongria Kondhs of Rayagada district in Odisha, their exquisite handwoven shawls, known as Kapdaganda, are on the verge of acquiring the prestigious Geographical Indicator (GI) tag while Koraput district's 'Koraput Kalajeera Rice,' often referred to as the 'Prince of Rice,' has obtained Geographical Indications (GI) status.

**Kapdaganda Shawls: A Cultural Treasure and the Quest for a GI Tag**

Kapdaganda shawls, adorned with intricate embroidery, hold a special place in the Dongria Kondh culture, symbolizing gratitude and showcasing traditional craftsmanship at its finest. The journey towards obtaining the GI tag for Kapdaganda began with the Niyamgiri Dongria Kondh Weavers' Association (NDKWA) collaborating with the Directorate of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute.

**Koraput Kalajeera Rice: The Prince of Rice Receives GI Recognition**

In another remarkable achievement for Odisha, 'Koraput Kalajeera Rice,' often referred to as the 'Prince of Rice,' has obtained Geographical Indications (GI) status. This aromatic rice variety, cherished for its nutritional value, has been cultivated by tribal farmers in Koraput district for generations. Koraput Kalajeera Rice, often likened to coriander seeds in appearance, is renowned for its black color, exceptional aroma, delicious taste, and pleasing texture.

New Launch Bilingual

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