

Weekly One Liners 21st to 27th of October 2024

UDAN Scheme

In a landmark announcement on October 21, 2024, Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu declared that the government will extend the **UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) scheme** for an additional **10 years**. The decision, made during a special event celebrating eight years of the scheme, reinforces the government's commitment to enhancing regional air connectivity and making air travel accessible to every citizen of India.

The UDAN scheme, launched on October 21, 2016, has been instrumental in not only boosting regional airlines but also creating thousands of jobs and significantly contributing to the growth of tourism across India. With 601 air routes and 71 operationalized airports under the scheme, UDAN has drastically improved air travel infrastructure in underserved and remote regions.

The UDAN Scheme's Journey: 2016–2024

The UDAN scheme was initially launched for a period of 10 years in 2016. Its core objectives include:

- **Enhancing regional air connectivity** by offering subsidies to airlines that operate flights on unserved or underserved routes.
- **Boosting tourism and trade** by connecting smaller cities and remote regions with major hubs.
- **Making flying affordable** for the common citizen by capping airfares on specific routes.

Over the past eight years, UDAN has seen remarkable growth, operationalizing more than 601 air routes and making 71 airports fully functional. This has not only bridged the accessibility gap between India's metropolitan and non-metro areas but also revolutionized the nation's aviation sector by reducing airfares on regional routes.

Extension for Another 10 Years

- In his address, Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu highlighted the success of the UDAN scheme and the reasons for extending it for another decade. He noted that UDAN has made substantial contributions to connecting the hinterlands of India to urban centers, thus boosting regional development and contributing to the overall economy. With the scheme set to expire in 2026, this extension signals a continued commitment to sustainable regional aviation growth.
- Additionally, Civil Aviation Secretary Vumlunmang Vualnam emphasized that while the extension is welcome, the ministry is also looking into the financial viability of the scheme, with an aim to streamline the subsidy and operational procedures. Ensuring that the scheme remains fiscally sustainable is critical to maintaining the affordability and frequency of flights across the country's remote regions.

India's Aviation Infrastructure: From 74 to 157 Airports

- One of the most notable successes of the UDAN scheme has been the exponential increase in the number of operational airports across India. When the scheme was launched in 2016, India had only 74 airports in service. By 2024, this number has more than doubled to 157, a clear testament to UDAN's success in boosting India's aviation infrastructure.
- This growth is a part of the broader vision to ensure that aviation infrastructure in India continues to expand, with a goal of 350-400 operational airports by 2047. This ambitious target aligns with India's 100th year of independence, positioning the nation as a global leader in aviation connectivity and infrastructure.

Milestones in RCS-UDAN Development

UDAN Versions

- **UDAN 1.0** : Awarded 128 flight routes to five airline companies across 70 airports, including 36 newly operational airports.
- **UDAN 2.0** : Announced connections to 73 underserved and unserved airports; included helipads for the first time.
- **UDAN 3.0** : Introduced tourism routes and connected water aerodromes with seaplanes, focusing on the Northeast Region.
- **UDAN 4.0** : Emphasized operations in the Northeastern regions, hilly states, and islands, incorporating helicopters and seaplanes.

UDAN 5.0

- Launched with improvements based on stakeholder feedback, focusing on Category-2 (20-80 seats) and Category-3 (>80 seats) aircraft.
- Removed the 600 km distance cap, allowing airlines to operate without distance restrictions.
- Airlines must commence operations within 4 months of route award.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked the 8th anniversary of the **UDAN (Ude Desh ke Aam Nagrik) scheme**, celebrating its transformative impact on India's aviation sector. **Launched in October 2016**, UDAN aimed to make air travel affordable for the common man and boost regional connectivity.

BRICS Summit 2024

The **2024 BRICS Summit**, held in **Kazan, Russia**, from October 22-24, marks a significant turning point for the group as Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE join its ranks following their inclusion at the 2023 summit. The event centers around the theme, **"Strengthening Multilateralism for Fair Global Development and Security,"** with key discussions on alternative global payment systems, dedollarization, and enhanced cooperation. The summit witnessed the adoption of the BRICS Kazan Declaration, endorsing UN reforms and investigating cross-border financial solutions to reduce reliance on the US dollar.

16th BRICS Summit: Key Outcomes

- **BRICS Pay:** A new payment system introduced to facilitate financial transactions among member nations, providing an alternative to SWIFT for international settlements.
- **Kazan Declaration:** Adoption of reforms to the UN, support for Palestine's full UN membership under the two-state solution, and deliberations on using national currencies for trade.

Key Bilateral Meetings

- **China-Russia:** Presidents Xi and Putin reaffirmed their strategic partnership, advancing the Belt and Road Initiative and Eurasian Economic Union integration.
- **India-China:** PM Modi and President Xi resolved a four-year military standoff, aiming to bolster relations between the two ancient civilizations.
- **India-Iran:** Discussions focused on Chabahar Port, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and the Israel-Palestine conflict.
- **Russia-South Africa:** President Ramaphosa acknowledged Russia's support during apartheid, reinforcing their ties.

Global Participation

- Leaders from several nations, including South Africa, China, India, and UAE, attended, with Brazilian President Lula da Silva participating online due to health reasons. Other countries such as Armenia, Belarus, and Uzbekistan also sent delegates, contributing to the growing influence of BRICS on global geopolitics.

15th BRICS Summit

- The **15th BRICS Summit**, held in **Johannesburg**, marked a significant milestone with the group's expansion by inviting **six new members: Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE**. The expansion highlights BRICS' aim to strengthen its global influence and increase representation from the Global South, effective from January 2024. Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism, international law, and sustainable development, pushing for reforms in global governance bodies like the UN.

Key Developments

- BRICS Expansion and Influence
- The summit saw invitations extended to nations across Africa, Latin America, and West Asia, enhancing the group's geopolitical weight. Over 40 nations have expressed interest in joining BRICS, reflecting the bloc's growing relevance. The inclusion of energy-rich countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran also bolsters BRICS' strategic resources.

Common Currency and Space Cooperation

- The BRICS leaders agreed to explore the possibility of creating a common currency for trade and investment, aiming to reduce reliance on the US dollar. India proposed the formation of a BRICS space consortium, with particular significance following its successful lunar mission.

India's Role and Challenges

- While India stands to benefit from a more diverse BRICS, it faces challenges, including managing its relationships with China, navigating trade imbalances, and ensuring a balanced approach within the group. India advocates for global governance reforms in the UN and other multilateral organizations, warning that without reforms, these institutions may become obsolete.

A Platform for Global Reform

- India, along with other BRICS members, seeks to use the bloc's expansion to push for broader reforms in global institutions. The expansion sets the stage for BRICS to play a pivotal role in reshaping 21st-century global governance, ensuring that developing nations have a stronger voice on the world stage.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Odisha is set to host the **18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** from **January 8th to 10th next year in its capital city, Bhubaneswar**. The event, which celebrates the contributions of the Indian diaspora, will take place at Janata Maidan.

Key Event Details

- **Event :** 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)
- **Dates :** January 8 to 10, 2025
- **Location :** Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar, Odisha
- **Approval :** Proposal approved by Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi after submission from the Union Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Event Organization

Jointly Organized by

- Odisha Government
- Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)

Preparations

- A five-member delegation from the MEA has visited Bhubaneswar to coordinate with state officials.
- Various committees have been established to ensure smooth execution of the event.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

Significance and History

Overview

- Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated annually on January 9th to honor the contributions of the overseas Indian community towards the development of India.
- The date was chosen to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's return to India from South Africa in 1915, marking the start of his role in India's freedom movement.

Key Historical Milestones

First Celebration

- PBD was **first celebrated in 2003** to recognize the contributions of the Indian diaspora.

Biennial Event

- **Since 2015, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas has been held every two years to engage the Indian diaspora in developmental initiatives.**

Last Edition

- The previous **PBD was held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.**

Significance of January 9th

- **Mahatma Gandhi's Return to India (1915)**
- **January 9 was chosen for the PBD celebration to honor Mahatma Gandhi's return to Mumbai from South Africa in 1915.**
- Gandhi's return marked a significant turning point in India's freedom struggle, symbolizing the potential of the Indian diaspora in shaping the nation's future.

Importance of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas

- PBD recognizes the **invaluable contributions of the Indian diaspora to the nation's socio-economic, cultural, and political progress.**
- The event serves as a **platform for overseas Indians to reconnect with their roots and contribute to India's development through investment, knowledge sharing, and policy collaboration.**
- The celebration offers an opportunity for the Government of India to engage with the global Indian community, understand their needs, and foster relationships that support India's global outreach.

COP on United Nations Biodiversity Conference

The two-week United Nations Biodiversity Conference (**COP16**) commenced today in **Colombia**, bringing together environmental leaders from nearly 200 countries to evaluate historic commitments **aimed at halting and reversing the loss of biodiversity.**

Conference Objectives

- Delegates in Cali will discuss strategies **to combat the rapid rate of destruction of natural habitats and ensure compliance** with the 2022 biodiversity accord.
- Countries are expected to commit to setting aside 30% of their territories for conservation purposes and to reduce subsidies for businesses that negatively impact the environment.
- The conference aims to establish mandatory reporting for companies on their environmental impact, promoting transparency and accountability.
- Countries were **expected to submit their biodiversity plans** by the start of the summit, but as of Friday, only 31 out of 195 countries had filed plans with the UN biodiversity secretariat.

About United Nations Biodiversity Conference

- The UN Biodiversity Conference is the **regular meeting of the countries who have signed (and are therefore 'parties to') the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).**
- CBD is an international agreement for conserving biodiversity with the vision of "living in harmony with nature by 2050".
- The **convention was adopted at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992.**
- The first Conference of the Parties to the convention (**COP 1**) **took place in Nassau, Bahamas in 1994.**
- The COP is the arena for international governments to meet and review progress on the convention and establish new measures needed to support its goals.

Objectives

- The conservation of biological diversity,
- The sustainable use of its components,
- The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of biological diversity.

How many countries are part of the Convention on Biological Diversity?

- **A total of 196 countries** (including India) are party to the Convention on Biological Diversity – although the United States is notably absent.
- Each country is required **to set National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)** detailing how the principles of the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources will be integrated into their country's national policies.

Secretariat

- The CBD Secretariat is based in Montreal, Canada.

INDIA-CHINA LAC Agreement

India recently announced a pivotal agreement regarding patrolling along the **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** with China. This development is seen as a potential stepping stone toward normalizing relations between the two nations following tensions that escalated in 2020. The pact entails a structured approach to disengagement and resolution of the long-standing border disputes, specifically in areas like the **Depsang Plains and Demchok**.

Key Highlights of the Agreement

Restoration of Patrolling Rights

The agreement allows both nations to restore mutual patrolling rights in the Depsang Plains and the Demchok region, areas where disputes existed even before the 2020 border incursions. Indian troops will now be permitted to patrol up to **Patrolling Points (PP) 10 to 13 in the Depsang Plains and the Charding Nullah in Demchok**. Notably, areas where previous disengagements occurred—such as **Galwan Valley, Pangong Tso, and Gogra-Hot Springs**—are explicitly excluded from renegotiation.



India-China LAC Agreement: What this means, Implications and Cautions

Three-Step Process: Disengagement, De-escalation, and Demilitarization

The agreement outlines a phased process focusing on:

1. **Disengagement:** Immediate withdrawal of troops from frontline positions.
2. **De-escalation:** Gradual reduction of military presence along the LAC, currently estimated at 50,000 to 60,000 troops from each side.
3. **Demilitarization:** Long-term objective of reducing military hardware and personnel in sensitive border areas.

This structured approach aims to prevent future incidents, particularly those akin to the deadly clashes in Galwan Valley, which claimed the lives of 20 Indian soldiers and at least four Chinese soldiers.

Background: The Road to Agreement

Modi’s Call for Improved Relations

In April 2024, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized the importance of addressing the prolonged border situation to normalize India-China relations. His call for constructive dialogue was met with a positive response from Beijing.

Positive Chinese Response

Chinese officials acknowledged that the relationship between India and China transcends the border dispute, indicating a willingness to engage in constructive dialogue.

Focus on Patrolling Rights

In May 2024, Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar articulated optimism regarding the resolution of remaining border disputes, particularly highlighting the significance of patrolling rights in the Ladakh region.

Significance of the Patrolling Pact

The patrolling arrangement is a cornerstone of the agreement and is critical for maintaining order and stability along the LAC. In the absence of a clear physical demarcation, regular patrols are essential for asserting territorial claims. The Indian troops typically patrol to their perceived borders and leave behind markers, such as Indian-made items, to indicate their presence.

Guidelines for Troop Conduct

The agreement also reaffirms commitments made in the 2005 Border Pact, specifically Article 4, which outlines guidelines for troop conduct during face-offs. This includes self-restraint in encounters, prohibition of force, and mutual courtesy, aiming to prevent escalation during incidents along the border.

Diverging Interpretations Post-Agreement

Following the announcement, there were noticeable differences in how India and China interpreted the agreement:

Indian Perspective

India’s official statement emphasized a **“complete disengagement and resolution of issues”** arising from the 2020 confrontations. Indian leaders reiterated that a comprehensive resolution of border standoffs is a prerequisite for normalizing bilateral relations.

Chinese Perspective

In contrast, China described the agreement as **“important progress”** but maintained that broader relations should not be held hostage to the border dispute. This reflects a preference for a compartmentalized approach to diplomatic relations.

Planned Steps for Future Resolution

Both countries have indicated plans for future dialogue to seek a fair and mutually acceptable solution to the boundary question. **India’s Special Representatives** are set to meet soon, while China aims for diplomatic discussions at various levels to restore relations.

Conclusion: Cautious Optimism in India's Strategic Circles

While there is cautious optimism regarding the path forward, strategic circles in India are mindful of the complexities involved. The phased process of **disengagement, de-escalation, and eventual troop reduction** is anticipated to take several years, contingent on both nations' adherence to the agreement. The future remains uncertain as to whether these steps will unfold in parallel or sequentially, but the initial steps have initiated a trust-building process between two historically adversarial neighbors.

Future Implications of the LAC Agreement

The LAC agreement holds significant implications for both countries. While it serves as a catalyst for trust-building and aims to prevent future clashes, India's cautious approach, in contrast to China's broader focus on ties, hints at the complexities ahead. The path to lasting resolution may require extensive negotiations, underscoring the delicate balance that both nations must navigate as they seek to redefine their bilateral relationship.

Centre Appoints 29 Joint Secretaries

In a significant move aimed at strengthening various departments, the Government of India has appointed 29 officers as Joint Secretaries across different ministries and sectors. The reshuffle, orchestrated by the Centre, involves officers from a range of central services, including the **Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS), Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE), Indian Audit and Accounts Service (IA&AS), and Indian Revenue Service (IRS)**, among others. This reshuffle reflects the government's commitment to optimizing governance by assigning experienced and specialized personnel to pivotal roles.

Key Appointments in the Ministry of Home Affairs

Three officers have been designated as Joint Secretaries in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA):

- **Praveen Kumar Rai** and **Rakesh Kumar Pandey**, both officers from the **Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS)**, have been entrusted with Joint Secretary roles in the Home Ministry.
- **Rajesh Gupta**, from the **Indian Railway Service of Electrical Engineers (IRSEE)**, has also been appointed as Joint Secretary in the MHA, bringing his engineering expertise to the table.

Additionally, **Raj Kumar**, a 1999-batch officer from the **Indian Audit and Accounts Service (IA&AS)**, has been appointed as **Director (Finance)** in the **Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)**, where he will serve a five-year tenure under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Strategic Roles in Economic and Cooperative Sectors

Several senior officers have been assigned to roles critical to India's economic growth and cooperative development:

- **Deepak Agarwal**, a 2000-batch **Indian Administrative Service (IAS)** officer from the Uttar Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as **Managing Director (Joint Secretary level)** at the **National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED)**. NAFED plays a crucial role in promoting cooperative marketing, and Agarwal's leadership is expected to enhance its efficiency.
- **Premjit Lal** has taken the role of **Executive Director** at the **India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO)**, where his leadership will focus on promoting Indian trade and organizing events to enhance global trade engagement.

Appointments in Administrative and Personnel Management

To improve administrative efficiency and streamline personnel management, two experienced IAS officers have been appointed to significant positions:

- **Chauhan Sarita Chand** has been appointed as **Joint Secretary** in the **Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances**, an essential department focused on improving governance mechanisms and addressing public grievances.
- **P Bala Kiran**, another IAS officer, has been appointed as **Joint Secretary** in the **Department of Personnel & Training**, where he will play a role in overseeing personnel policies, training, and human resource management across government departments.

Key Roles in Social Welfare and Women Empowerment

In a move that underscores the government's commitment to social welfare and women's empowerment, the Centre has appointed **Bhavna Saxena**, a 1996-batch **Indian Police Service (IPS)** officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre, as the **CEO of the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)**. CARA, under the **Ministry of Women & Child Development**, is responsible for the adoption process in India, and Saxena's experience in the police service is expected to bring operational discipline to this sensitive area.

Appointments in Petroleum, Commerce, and Corporate Affairs

Key appointments were made in departments critical to India's industrial and economic landscape:

- **Anjan Kumar Mishra**, a 1998-batch officer from the **Indian Ordnance Factories Service (IOFS)**, has been designated as **Secretary of the Petroleum & Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB)** under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas. This role is crucial in regulating India's oil and gas sector, which has strategic importance for the country's energy security.

- **Kesang Yangzom Sherpa**, a 1995-batch IRS (Income Tax cadre) officer, has taken on the role of **Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce**. Her experience in tax-related fields will bring valuable insights to the department responsible for regulating and promoting India's international trade.
- **Balamurugan D** has been appointed as **Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Corporate Affairs**, where he will be tasked with overseeing corporate governance, regulatory frameworks, and the facilitation of business in India.

Environmental and Agricultural Roles

Recognizing the importance of environmental conservation and sustainable agriculture, the Centre has appointed senior bureaucrats in relevant roles:

- **Rajat Agarwal** and **Ved Prakash Mishra** have been appointed as **Joint Secretaries in the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change**. Their roles will involve tackling issues related to environmental policy, climate change initiatives, and forest conservation, which are critical to India's ecological future.
- **Rama Shankar Sinha** has been appointed as **Joint Secretary in the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying**. His role is pivotal in supporting the livestock sector, ensuring food security, and providing livelihood to millions in rural areas.

Enhancing Development in the North Eastern Region

As part of the government's ongoing efforts to foster development in India's North Eastern states, **Niraj Kumar**, an officer from the **Central Secretariat Service (CSS)**, has been appointed as **Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER)**. This role will involve promoting developmental initiatives and addressing socio-economic challenges in the North East.



National Affairs

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated three new airports developed under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) – UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh today. The newly inaugurated airports are located in **Rewa (Madhya Pradesh), Ambikapur (Chhattisgarh), and Saharanpur (Uttar Pradesh)**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Karmayogi Saptah, or National Learning Week**, on October 19, 2024, at the **Dr. Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi**. This initiative is part of Mission Karmayogi, which aims to foster continuous skill enhancement among civil servants, aligning their competencies with the evolving goals of India, especially towards achieving a developed nation by 2047. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Union Culture and Tourism **Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** and **Minister of State for Coal and Mines Satish Chandra Dubey** inaugurated the **first-ever coal gallery** at the **National Science Centre in New Delhi**. The exhibition, titled **“Black Diamond – Unveiling the Depths,”** highlights **coal's journey** from its formation to its essential role in modern energy production. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **first anniversary of Namu Bharat train** operations was celebrated as **Namu Bharat Diwas in New Delhi**, marking a significant milestone in India's transportation history. The **National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC)** organized the event, attended by Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs, **Shri Manohar Lal Khattar**, and Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, **Shri Tokhan Sahu**. During the celebration, excellence awards were presented to outstanding employees who contributed to the success of the Namu Bharat initiative. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister **Shri Pralhad Joshi** has launched the retail phase of **Bharat Chana Dal Phase II in Delhi-NCR**, marking a significant step in the government's commitment to provide essential food items at affordable prices. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The government will celebrate the **150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel** with a nationwide program spanning two years, from 2024 to 2026. Announced by **Union Home Minister Amit Shah on October 23, 2024**, the initiative aims to honor Patel's monumental contributions to India. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, **Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh**, also known as Lalan Singh, is set to launch the **21st Livestock Census operation**, a significant initiative aimed at gathering comprehensive data on India's livestock sector. The launch event is scheduled for October 25, 2024. ([Click here to read article](#))

- The Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) has announced a significant **new initiative for central government pensioners aged 80** and older, introducing an additional pension known as the compassionate allowance. This development comes with newly issued guidelines aimed at simplifying the process for retirees to access these supplementary benefits. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG)** has successfully concluded its **34th Capacity Building Programme (CBP)** for Maldivian civil servants in New Delhi. Held from October 14–25, 2024, this two-week program, organized in collaboration with the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)**, represents the second initiative under a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by **India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar and Maldives' Foreign Minister Mr. Moosa Zameer**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Airbus has inaugurated its new **India and South Asia Headquarters and Training Centre**, marking a significant investment in the Indian aerospace sector. Located in the National Capital Region (NCR), this facility is poised to play a key role in **training pilots and technicians** and expanding Airbus's industrial footprint in India. The centre is equipped with four A320 simulators and boasts a **capacity to train up to 800 pilots and 200 technicians annually**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh** launched the 21st Livestock Census on Friday, which will be conducted **until February next year at a cost of ₹200 crore**. He emphasized that the collection of precise data is crucial for the government to formulate effective policies **aimed at ensuring animal health security and promoting growth in the livestock sector**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Haryana has become the first state to implement sub-quotas** for the Dalit community by **subclassifying the Scheduled Castes (SCs)**. The decision follows the Supreme Court's August 2023 ruling, granting states the power to divide SCs and STs for preferential reservations. Haryana's move, backed by a state commission's recommendations, is aimed at addressing the underrepresentation of the **"Deprived Scheduled Castes" (DSC)**, who are more marginalized in employment sectors compared to **"Other Scheduled Castes" (OSC)**. The state has divided the SC community into two groups: DSC, which includes 36 castes like Balmikis and Dhanaks, and OSC, which includes castes such as Chamars and Jatavs. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In a pioneering move aimed at **enhancing the safety of women** in healthcare settings, **Madhya Pradesh** has installed **'pink alarms'** at the government-run district hospital and medical college in **Datia**. This initiative addresses growing concerns about the safety of female staff in public hospitals, a pressing issue that gained heightened attention following the tragic rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. ([Click here to read article](#))
- A significant archaeological discovery has been made at the **Sri Singeeswarar temple in Mappedu village, Tiruvallur district**, where a set of copper plate inscriptions dating back to the 16th Century CE were found. During a routine check of the temple's lockers, overseen by the **Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR and CE) Department**, officials uncovered two leaves of copper plates strung together with a ring featuring the seal of the **Vijayanagara Kingdom**. The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** confirmed that the inscriptions, engraved in 1513 during the reign of King Krishnadevaraya, are written in **Sanskrit using the Nandinagari script**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In a significant move to enhance traffic law enforcement, Kerala's Motor Vehicle Department (**MVD**) has **launched the Citizen Sentinel mobile application**, empowering citizens to actively participate in ensuring road safety. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Odisha government has announced an increase in the **casual leave (CL)** entitlement for women employees, granting an additional **12 days annually**, effective immediately. This brings their total CL to 27 days, compared to 15 days for male employees. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Delhi government, led by Chief Minister Atishi**, has approved the establishment of special courts dedicated to people with disabilities. This initiative aims to provide fair and swift justice by designing court environments that cater specifically to the needs of individuals with disabilities. ([Click here to read article](#))

States in the News

- Chennai is set to witness a significant advancement in its public transportation system with the upcoming trial run of the first three-coach **driverless train** for the **Phase II project** of the Chennai Metro Rail. This ambitious initiative, part of a larger Rs **63,246 crore** investment in urban infrastructure, marks a pivotal step in modernizing the city's metro services and improving overall connectivity.
- The inaugural trial run is expected to take place on **October 26**, with high-profile dignitaries such as **Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal Khattar** invited to flag off the event. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **A Grand Cultural Event** The **International Gita Mahotsav** will be celebrated from **November 28 to December 15, 2024**, in **Kurukshetra, Haryana**, promising a grand display of Indian heritage, spirituality, and culture. Since 2016, this event has expanded globally, spreading the message of the **Bhagavad Gita** and enhancing Haryana's global presence. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **The Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has sanctioned a **USD 434.25 million loan to support Assam's renewable energy ambitions** by constructing a **500 MW grid-connected solar photovoltaic (PV) facility** in the Karbi Anglong district. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Bihar Chief Minister **Nitish Kumar** inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for a range of development projects totaling Rs 7,160 crore. Among these initiatives are 2,615 panchayat government buildings spread across various blocks in the state and a new panchayat resource center in Sonepur, Saran district. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **European Investment Bank (EIB Global)** has announced a significant loan of **€300 million (approximately ₹2,800 crore)** for the construction of a new suburban railway network in Bengaluru. This initiative aims to build four dedicated rail corridors covering 149 km, with plans for 58 stations and two depots. ([Click here to read article](#))
- NTPC has teamed up with the Indian Army to establish a **solar hydrogen-based microgrid at Chushul, Ladakh**, aimed at ensuring a stable power supply for off-grid Army locations using green hydrogen. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for this innovative project through video conferencing. ([Click here to read article](#))

International Affairs

- Newly inaugurated **President Prabowo Subianto** has unveiled **Indonesia's largest-ever Cabinet, comprising 109 members**. Named the **"Red and White Cabinet"** after Indonesia's flag, this lineup reflects his vision of a strong, unified government. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On October 21, **Pakistan enacted the Constitution (26th Amendment) Act, 2024**, limiting the Chief Justice's tenure to three years and establishing a special commission for appointing the top judge from **three senior-most Supreme Court judges**. The amendment received **President Asif Ali Zardari's** assent ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Pakistan has appointed Justice Yahya Afridi** as the next Chief Justice, bypassing the traditional seniority principle. This decision follows the **26th Constitutional Amendment**, which granted the committee the authority to appoint the top judge, replacing the seniority-based elevation system. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Vietnam's parliament** elected army general **Luong Cuong** as the **new state president**, marking a significant move to restore stability after a period of political upheaval. The 67-year-old Cuong succeeds To Lam. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu** has announced the introduction of **India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** to enhance the country's economy by improving financial inclusion and transaction efficiency. This initiative is part of a broader strategy to strengthen ties with India following Muizzu's previous stance against Indian military presence in the Maldives. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Egypt** has reached a significant public health milestone by being officially declared **'malaria-free' by the World Health Organization (WHO) on October 20, 2024**. This achievement makes Egypt the **second country in the world to receive this certification in 2024, following Cabo Verde**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Agreements/MoUs Signed

- **India and Pakistan** have agreed to **renew their pact on the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for an additional five years**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In a significant step to bolster **entrepreneurship in India's Northeast**, the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Shillong has partnered with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI). Through its **IIM Shillong Foundation for Incubation and Enterprise (IIMSFI)**, this collaboration introduces a structured entrepreneurship training and incubation programme. ([click here to read article](#))
- **The Election Commission of India** signed an agreement for electoral cooperation with **Uzbekistan's central poll body**. This agreement was formalized during Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar's visit to Tashkent, where he is serving as an international observer for the upcoming elections scheduled for October 27. ([Click here to read article](#))

Books and Authors

- Few conservationists in India can claim a legacy as impactful as **M.K. Ranjitsinh**, whose new book, **Mountain Mammals of the World**, published by **Penguin Random House**, serves as a testament to his lifelong dedication to protecting endangered species. **Mountain Mammals of the World** is not just a book—it's an essential reference for wildlife enthusiasts and scholars alike, offering a comprehensive guide to **62 species and 78 subspecies** of large mammals that inhabit some of the world's most rugged and inaccessible mountain ranges. ([Click here to read article](#))

Banking/Economy/Business News

- According to a report released by the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, the world's total **public debt is poised to surpass \$100 trillion this year for the first time.** ([Click here to read article](#))
- Paytm has received approval from the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** to onboard new UPI users, ending a nine-month embargo imposed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). This decision is expected to increase Paytm's UPI transaction volumes and boost its market position. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **The International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has maintained its **growth projections for India**, forecasting the economy to expand by **7% in FY25 and 6.5% in FY26**. According to the IMF, the post-pandemic recovery, fueled by pent-up demand, has largely run its course as the economy now aligns with its potential growth trajectory. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Deloitte **India's latest Economic Outlook** projects that India's economy will grow between **7.0% and 7.2%** in the fiscal year 2024-25, despite a recent slowdown where GDP expanded by only 6.7% year-on-year in Q1 of FY25. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has expanded its 'Alert List' of **unauthorized forex trading platforms by adding 13 new entities, bringing the total to 88.** This list includes names of entities not authorized to deal in forex under the **Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA)**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Freo, the digital finance application, has received a corporate agent license from the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)**, allowing it to offer a range of customized insurance products to its 25 million users. This initiative comes amid India's low insurance penetration rate of **approximately 4.2%**, which is significantly below the **global average of 7%**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Israel** has become the newest **non-regional member** of the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**. The Manila-based lender announced the news on Friday, marking a major step for Israel in enhancing its global strategic ties and economic outreach. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **HDFC Life**, a prominent player in India's insurance sector, has earned dual accolades for its commitment to **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)** by **Avtar and Seramount**. Recognised among the **Best Companies for Women in India (BCWI)** and as **'Exemplars of Inclusion'** in the Most Inclusive Companies Index (MICI), **HDFC Life** stands out for its supportive ecosystem not only for women but also for people with disabilities, the **LGBTQ+ community**, and diverse cultural backgrounds. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** successfully raised **₹5,000 crore** through the issuance of Additional Tier-I (AT-I) bonds, marking its first issuance for the current financial year. The bonds, which carry a coupon **rate of 7.98%**, are aimed at strengthening the bank's capital base and comply with **Basel-III norms**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **International Copper Association (ICA)** is a prominent global industry body that brings together major copper producers worldwide. Representing **50% of the world's copper production**, ICA is a **not-for-profit trade association** comprising 33 member organizations spanning six continents. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries** has teamed up with **US chipmaker Nvidia** to establish AI infrastructure in India, announced during the **Nvidia AI Summit 2024 in Mumbai**. This collaboration aims to position India as a leading intelligence market, with plans to deploy **Nvidia's GB 200** supercomputer technology for large-scale AI capabilities. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Nvidia** has officially **dethroned Apple** as the world's most valuable company, achieving this milestone on Friday after a remarkable surge in its stock price driven by soaring demand for its cutting-edge supercomputing AI chips. At one point, **Nvidia's market value soared to an impressive \$3.53 trillion**, just edging out **Apple, which was valued at \$3.52 trillion**, according to data from LSEG. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (**NIPFP**) has **revised its growth forecast for India to 6.9-7.1% for FY25**, citing a notable moderation in growth during the June quarter. This slowdown is attributed to a significant contraction in net exports and reduced government consumption due to the implementation of the model code of conduct. ([Click here to read article](#))

Appointments/Resignations

- The Indian Chamber of Commerce (**ICC**), a prominent national business association, has appointed **Abhyuday Jindal**, Managing Director of Jindal Stainless Limited, as its **new president**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Smt. Vijaya Kishore Rahatkar** has been appointed as the **new Chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW)**, making her the 9th individual to hold this esteemed position. The announcement was made by the Narendra Modi government, highlighting a commitment to advancing women's rights and issues in India. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Vikram Dev Dutt**, a **1993-batch IAS officer from the AGMUT cadre**, has officially assumed the role of Coal Secretary. Previously serving as the Director General of the **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)**, Dutt takes over from VL Kantha Rao, who held the additional charge after Amrit Lal Meena was appointed as the Chief Secretary of Bihar. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Ajay Kumar Singh**, a senior IPS officer, has been appointed as the **new Director General of Police (DGP) for Jharkhand**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Prabhakar Raghavan**, an alumnus of the **Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IIT-Madras)**, has been appointed as **Google's Chief Technologist**. He was previously the **Senior Vice President at Google**, responsible for overseeing a broad spectrum of products including **Google Search, Assistant, Geo, Ads, Commerce, and Payments**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Pranav Chawda** has been appointed as the new chief executive officer (CEO) of **JP Morgan Chase India for a term of three years**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Governing Board of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (**ICRISAT**) has **announced the appointment of Dr. Himanshu Pathak as the Director General-designate of the esteemed institute**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Justice Sanjiv Khanna** has been appointed as the **51st Chief Justice of India (CJI)**, with his oath-taking ceremony set for November 11, 2024. His appointment follows CJI DY Chandrachud's recommendation and was confirmed by President Droupadi Murmu. Justice Khanna will serve as CJI until his retirement on May 13, 2025, holding a tenure of approximately 183 days. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Government of India has appointed **Dr. Neena Malhotra** as the **next Ambassador of India to the Kingdom of Sweden**. Currently serving as an Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of External Affairs, Dr. Malhotra is an esteemed **Indian Foreign Service officer from the 1992 batch**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Axis Bank** has officially announced the re-appointment of **Amitabh Chaudhry** as its Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer for a new three-year term, effective from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2027. ([Click here to read article](#))
- the third edition of the **Indian Navy's Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) Seminar**, took place in New Delhi on October 22, 2024. Chaired by **Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan**, Vice Chief of Naval Staff (VCNS), the event highlighted the Navy's commitment to showcasing significant advancements in innovation and indigenisation aimed at bolstering India's defense capabilities. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **India's fourth nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN)**, designated S4*, was officially **launched into the water** at the Ship Building Centre in Visakhapatnam, according to official sources. This advanced submarine represents a **significant leap in capability and size compared to its predecessor, INS Arihant**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)**, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the establishment of a new missile testing range in **Nagayalanka, Andhra Pradesh**. This initiative aims to bolster India's defense capabilities, particularly for testing tactical missile systems. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **31st edition of the Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX)** is underway from **October 23 to 29, 2024**, at the **Eastern Naval Command (ENC) in Visakhapatnam**. This annual exercise showcases the evolving maritime collaboration between the **Indian Navy** and the **Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN)**, furthering the strategic partnership and shared objectives of maritime security and interoperability. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Indian Navy and German Navy recently completed their inaugural **Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX)** in the **Indian Ocean**, marking a key milestone in naval collaboration. The exercise, held in the **Bay of Bengal**, included joint operations involving **INS Delhi**, a guided-missile destroyer from India, and **Baden-Württemberg** and **Frankfurt Am Main**, a frigate and replenishment tanker from Germany. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Chanakya Defence Dialogue 2024** concluded on **October 25th** at the Manekshaw Centre in Delhi, marking the second edition of this significant international seminar hosted by the Indian Army. The event brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including policymakers, strategic thinkers, academics, veterans, and defense personnel from various countries, all focused on analyzing India's strategic directions and developmental priorities.
- The theme of this year's dialogue, **"Drivers in Nation Building: Fueling Growth Through Comprehensive Security,"** facilitated vital discussions on how security dynamics intertwine with national and international policymaking. ([Click here to read article](#))

Defence News

- The India-Oman bilateral naval exercise **Naseem-Al-Bahr**, held from October 13 to 18, 2024, off the **coast of Goa**, featured the participation of the Indian Navy's **INS Trikand** and **Dornier Maritime Patrol Aircraft**, alongside the Royal Navy of Oman's vessel **Al Seeb**. The exercise was conducted in two phases. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Army's **Sudarshan Chakra Corps** of the Southern Command is currently conducting **'Exercise SWAVLAMBAN SHAKTI'** at the **Babina Field Firing Ranges near Jhansi**, with the primary objective of enhancing combat capabilities through the integration of niche and emerging technologies. The exercise commenced on 17th October, 2024 and is set to continue until October 22, as stated in a defense release. ([Click here to read article](#))

- On October 25, 2024, the **Indian Navy's seventh Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC), named 'Abhay'**, was launched at M/s L&T's Kattupalli facility. Built by **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE)**, this vessel marks a significant addition to India's maritime defense capabilities. ([Click here to read article](#))

Awards and Recognitions

- Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)** has been recognized with the prestigious SHRM HR Excellence Awards at the **SHRM India Annual Conference 2024 in New Delhi**. The company received accolades in two significant categories: **'Excellence in Inclusion, Equity & Diversity'** and **'Excellence in Managing the Distributed Workforce.'** ([Click here to read article](#))
- Indian actor and philanthropist Darasing Khurana, 32**, has been honored with the prestigious **Mahatma Gandhi Leadership Award** for his impactful work in raising awareness about mental health issues, particularly in his role as the 'Commonwealth Year of Youth Champion'. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Urmila Chaudhary**, a prominent social campaigner from Nepal, has been honored with the prestigious **Global Anti-Racism Championship Award 2024**. The award was presented by U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken during a ceremony held at the Department of State in Washington, D.C. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **European Parliament** has awarded its prestigious **Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought** to **Venezuelan opposition leaders María Corina Machado and Edmundo González**. This esteemed honor recognizes their unwavering commitment to representing the Venezuelan people in their struggle to restore freedom and democracy amid ongoing political turmoil. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought** is the **highest human rights honor** awarded by the **European Union**. Named after the **Soviet physicist and dissident Andrei Sakharov**, the prize was established in **1988** and is awarded annually by the **European Parliament** to individuals or organizations that embody **human rights advocacy, democracy, and the rule of law**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Summits and Conferences News

- The **2024 BRICS Summit**, held in **Kazan, Russia**, from October 22-24. The summit witnessed the adoption of the **BRICS Kazan Declaration**, endorsing UN reforms and investigating cross-border financial solutions to reduce reliance on the US dollar.

- 16th BRICS Summit: Key Outcomes**
 - BRICS Pay:** A new payment system introduced to facilitate financial transactions among member nations, providing an alternative to SWIFT for international settlements.
 - Kazan Declaration:** Adoption of reforms to the UN, support for Palestine's full UN membership under the two-state solution, and deliberations on using national currencies for trade. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Ministry of Information & Broadcasting is proud to announce **Australia as the "Country of Focus"** for the **55th edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI)**, scheduled to take place in Goa from November 20 to 28, 2024. This special recognition celebrates Australia's dynamic contributions to the global film industry, showcasing its rich storytelling traditions, vibrant cinema culture, and innovative cinematic techniques. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The 2024 edition of the Embassy's flagship diaspora engagement event, **Pravasi Parichay**, was inaugurated by **Dr. Suhel Ajaz Khan, the Ambassador of India to Saudi Arabia**, at the Embassy Auditorium in Riyadh. This week-long cultural celebration kicked off with a specially curated event titled **"Classical Languages of India,"** designed to showcase the country's rich linguistic diversity.
- About Classical Languages of India
 - Earlier, India had six classical languages** Tamil, Sanskrit, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, and Odia.
 - Tamil was declared a classical language in 2004, Sanskrit in 2005, Kannada in 2008, Telugu in 2008, Malayalam in 2013, and Odia in 2014.
 - All the Classical Languages are listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
 - In October 2024** The Union Cabinet granted classical language status to Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali, increasing recognized classical languages to eleven. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Asia Clean Energy Summit (ACES)**, a cornerstone event of the annual Singapore International Energy Week (SIEW), is held on the **11th edition from October 22-24, 2024**, in Singapore. This premier conference and exhibition brings together experts, innovators, and policymakers to advance clean energy solutions in Asia. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Chief Minister Shri Bhupendra Patel inaugurated the **17th Urban Mobility India Conference & Expo-2024** today at the Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The event, running from **October 25 to 27, 2024**, gathers over **2,000 professionals** and academics to discuss the future of urban transport in India. The conference focuses on the theme **"Standardisation and Optimisation of Urban Transport Solutions,"** aiming to enhance urban mobility through integrated strategies and innovative practices. ([Click here to read article](#))

Ranks and Reports

- The **Economic Freedom of the World: 2024 Annual Report** evaluates the extent to which individuals in **165 jurisdictions** can make their own economic choices. According to the latest data from 2022, the top three most economically free regions are **Hong Kong (1st), Singapore (2nd), and Switzerland (3rd)**. The report indicates a global decline in economic freedom over the past three years, reversing a trend of improvement that lasted nearly two decades. Also **Japan: 11th, Germany: 16th, Korea: 32nd, France: 36th, Italy: 51st, Mexico: 65th, India: 84th, Brazil: 85th, China: 104th, Russia: 119th**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Shillong has emerged as the most popular destination for **Indian travellers in 2025**, as revealed by Skyscanner's "Travel Trends Report" released on Wednesday. Meghalaya's capital topped the list, surpassing **Baku (Azerbaijan) and Langkawi (Malaysia)**, showing a strong interest among Indians for unique and immersive experiences. ([Click here to read article](#))

Sports News

- **New Zealand Women's Team Lift the ICC T20 World Cup After 23 Years** at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium. They defeated the South African team with 32 runs. South Africa won the toss and opted to Bowl first. The New Zealand Team set the target of 158-5 after completing 20 overs. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **China's Liu Yukun**, the reigning Olympic champion in the Paris 2024 Olympics, was honored as the athlete of the year by the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF). Also, Korea's **Yang Ji-in**, was named the female athlete of the year, recognizing her remarkable achievements in the sport. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Ngangom Bala Devi**, born on February 2, 1990, has etched her name in **Indian football history** by becoming the **first Indian woman to score 50 international goals**. Playing as a forward for the Manipur Police and the Indian national team, Devi's journey reflects her dedication and significant contributions to women's football in India. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Railway Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) won the **Senior Women Inter-Departmental National Hockey Championship** by defeating **Indian Oil 3-1 in the final**, held at **Major Dhyanchand National Stadium**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **24th National Para-Swimming Championship** commenced on 20th October in **Goa**, showcasing a vibrant celebration of exceptional talent and unwavering determination among athletes from across the nation. ([Click here to read article](#))

- The **24th National Para-Swimming Championship** concluded with **Karnataka** emerging as the overall champion, amassing an impressive 392 points. The competition saw a fierce battle for the top spots, with Maharashtra finishing a close second with 378 points, and Rajasthan securing third place with 248 points. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Deepika Kumari**, a four-time Olympian from India, secured the **silver medal** in the **women's recurve event** at the **2024 Archery World Cup Final** held on **October 20, 2024**, in **Tlaxcala, Mexico**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Zimbabwe's cricket team etched their name in history by posting a record-breaking total of **344/4** in a T20 International, led by **Sikandar Raza's unbeaten 133** off just 43 balls. His explosive innings, featuring 15 sixes, helped Zimbabwe achieve this landmark in the **ICC Men's T20 World Cup Africa Sub-Regional Qualifier B** match against **Gambia**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Kagiso Rabada** has etched his name in cricket history by becoming the fastest bowler to reach 300 Test wickets based on balls bowled, achieving the milestone in just **11,817 deliveries**. The South African pace sensation is now among the greats, surpassing legends like **Waqar Younis (12,602 balls)** and **Dale Steyn (12,605 balls)**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In a spectacular performance during the second Test against New Zealand in Pune, **Ravichandran Ashwin** set a new benchmark by becoming the highest wicket-taker in the **ICC World Test Championship (WTC)**. He started the match just one wicket behind Australian spinner **Nathan Lyon**, who held the top spot with 187 wickets. However, Ashwin's brilliant bowling helped him overtake Lyon, ending the day with **189 WTC wickets**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Indian women's hockey legend **Rani Rampal** officially announced her retirement from international hockey on Thursday, marking the end of an illustrious career that spanned over 15 years. Known as the "Queen of Indian Hockey," Rani played 254 international matches and scored **120 goals**, leading India to numerous milestones, including the famous fourth-place finish at the **Tokyo 2020 Olympics**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In a prestigious recognition, Maria Sharapova and twins Bob and Mike Bryan were named to the **International Tennis Hall of Fame's Class of 2025**. The induction ceremony will be held on August 23 in Newport, Rhode Island, where they will be celebrated for their trailblazing achievements and contributions to tennis. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Indian men's football team** has made a modest advancement in the **FIFA rankings**, moving up one spot to **125th**, as per the latest update released on Thursday. This progress is attributed to their resilient performance in a recent international friendly against Vietnam, where they managed a 1-1 draw. ([Click here to read article](#))

Schemes and Committees News

- **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath** unveiled a series of **welfare schemes for police personnel**, including a substantial 70% increase in uniform allowance and a 25% hike in housing allowance for constables residing in barracks. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma** officially launched Mission Basundhara 3.0 at an event held at Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra in Guwahati. This ambitious initiative is designed to **empower indigenous communities** by providing them with formal land rights, ensuring greater security and recognition of their holdings. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya launched the upgraded **'e-Shram: One Stop Solution'** portal, aimed at enhancing access to social security schemes for over 300 million unorganised workers in India. The initiative consolidates data from various central ministries into a single repository, simplifying the registration process and ensuring that potential beneficiaries are identified state and district-wise. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The government has doubled the limit of Mudra loans under the **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)** from **Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh**, introducing a new **'Tarun Plus' category**. This change, announced by **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** in her **July 2024 Budget speech**, aims to promote entrepreneurship and support emerging business owners. ([Click here to read article](#))

Science and Technology News

- **The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras** has announced plans to launch its inaugural **international flagship centre** in Dubai, focusing on research, innovation, and entrepreneurship. Set to open in early 2025, this initiative aims to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange between India and the UAE. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Union Culture and Tourism **Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** and **Minister of State for Coal and Mines Satish Chandra Dubey** inaugurated the **first-ever coal gallery** at the **National Science Centre in New Delhi**. The exhibition, titled **"Black Diamond – Unveiling the Depths,"** highlights **coal's journey** from its formation to its essential role in modern energy production. ([Click here to read article](#))
- A team of scientists has discovered a new species of snake in the Western Himalayas, naming it **Anguiculus dicaprio** in honor of Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio, recognizing his significant contributions to wildlife conservation. ([Click here to read article](#))

- In a strategic move to bolster **artificial intelligence (AI)** in **India**, Meta has partnered with IndiaAI and the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** to drive open-source AI research and skill development. This collaboration includes establishing a Center for Generative AI at IIT Jodhpur and launching the **"AI for Skilling and Capacity Building"** initiative, aimed at empowering the youth and fostering a sustainable AI ecosystem. ([Click here to read article](#))

Important Days News

- **World Iodine Deficiency Day**, also known as **Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day**, is observed annually on **21st October**. The primary goal of this observance is to raise awareness about the importance of iodine in maintaining good health and to emphasize the adverse consequences of iodine deficiency, which remains a global public health issue. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Disarmament Week, starting annually on **October 24**, coincides with the **anniversary of the founding of the United Nations**. The week-long observance is dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of **disarmament** and promoting international dialogue to reduce the spread and impact of weapons. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Global Media and Information Literacy Week** is an annual event observed from **24th to 31st October** to raise awareness and celebrate the progress achieved towards Media and Information Literacy for all. This year theme of Global Media and Information Literacy Week, **The New Digital Frontiers of Information: "Media and Information Literacy for Public Interest Information"**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **United Nations Day**, celebrated annually on **October 24**, marks the anniversary of the entry into force of the **United Nations Charter** in **1945**. This day is a global celebration of the **UN's mission** to promote peace, security, human rights, and development around the world. In **2024**, **The United Nations was officially established on October 24, 1945, after the UN Charter was ratified by a majority of signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council: the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, China, and France.** ([Click here to read article](#))
- **World Development Information Day** is celebrated every year on **October 24**, coinciding with **United Nations Day**. This observance was established by the **United Nations General Assembly** in **1972**, with the primary goal of drawing global attention to development issues and promoting the dissemination of information that supports international cooperation for development. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **World Polio Day** is observed annually on **October 24** across the globe to raise awareness about the crippling disease, poliomyelitis, or polio. The day underscores global efforts to eradicate the disease and ensure a polio-free world for future generations. **World Polio Day** was established in **1985 by Rotary International** to commemorate the efforts of **Dr. Jonas Salk**, the lead researcher behind the development of the first successful polio vaccine. Dr. Salk's vaccine became the cornerstone in the global fight against polio. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)**, one of India's five Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), celebrates its **Raising Day on October 24 every year**. The **ITBP Raising Day** commemorates the founding of this elite paramilitary force, which was raised in the aftermath of the 1962 Sino-Indian War. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **International Day of Diplomats**, celebrated annually on **October 24**, shines a spotlight on the critical role that diplomats play in shaping international relations, promoting peace, and fostering cooperation among nations. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **International Dwarfism Awareness Day**, celebrated annually on **October 25**, highlights the lives and challenges faced by people with dwarfism, while also raising awareness about conditions like **Achondroplasia**. This day encourages understanding and inclusion of people with short stature, breaking stereotypes and misconceptions. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **World Day for Audiovisual Heritage** is celebrated annually on **October 27** to honor the efforts of audio-visual preservation professionals and institutions that work to protect our cultural heritage for future generations. Established by **UNESCO in 2005**, this day highlights the importance of preserving audiovisual materials like films, sound recordings, and broadcasts, which face unique risks such as **chemical decay** and **technological obsolescence**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Obituaries News

- **Vasant Anant Gadgil**, a revered Sanskrit scholar and founder of **Sharda Gyan Peetham**, passed away at the age of 94 in Pune. His contributions to the promotion of Sanskrit were vast, spanning from teaching at **Tilak Maharashtra University** to conducting international efforts in places like the US and Africa. He was deeply involved in researching ancient Sanskrit texts, such as the Vedas and Upanishads, and was a significant figure at the **Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Ron Ely, best known for his portrayal of **Tarzan in the 1960s NBC series**, has died at the age of 86. Ely passed away on September 29 at his home in Los Alamos, California. His daughter, Kirsten Casale Ely, shared the news, describing her father as a **"hero" and a "magical"** influence on those around him. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Professor Rohini Godbole**, an esteemed physicist and Padma Shri awardee, passed away on Friday in Bengaluru at the age of 72 following a brief illness. Known for her pioneering contributions to particle physics, Professor Godbole was also a leading advocate for gender equality, tirelessly championing equal opportunities for women in science. ([Click here to read article](#))

Miscellaneous News

- India has increased its grant for upgrading schools in **Sri Lanka's plantation areas**, raising its total commitment to **Rs. 600 million (INR 172.25 million)**. This initiative is aimed at improving educational infrastructure in the Indian-origin Tamil community, with the focus on nine schools across **Central, Uva, Sabaragamuwa**, and Southern Provinces. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In a significant development within the Indian entertainment industry, **Adar Poonawalla**, CEO of the Serum Institute of India, has entered into a binding agreement to acquire a **50% stake in Karan Johar's** renowned production house, Dharma Productions, and its digital arm, Dharmatic Entertainment. The deal, valued at **₹1,000 crore**, represents a landmark partnership between two major entities from vastly different industries: cinema and pharmaceuticals. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Hurricane Oscar** made landfall in the **Bahamas before crossing Cuba's eastern coast**, leaving at least six dead and causing widespread destruction. The storm triggered power outages that halted daily activities, prompting protests in neighborhoods like Santos Suárez and central Havana. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a warning regarding a low-pressure area over the Bay of Bengal, predicting it will intensify into a **severe cyclonic storm** by October 23. The storm is expected to make landfall along the coasts of Odisha and West Bengal on October 24. It is likely that Cyclone Dana will bring heavy rains in both states for at least three days. ([Click here to read article](#))

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Static Takeaways

Sr. No	Organization Name	Designation	Estd. Year	Headquarters
1.	Indian Meteorological Department	-	1875	New Delhi, India
2.	UNESCO	Audrey Azoulay (Director-General)	November 16, 1945	Paris, France
3.	United Nations	António Guterres (Secretary General)	1945	New York, USA
4.	BRICS	-	2009	Shanghai, China
5.	Steel Authority of India (SAIL)	-	January 24, 1973	New Delhi, India
6.	Indian Chamber of Commerce	Abhyuday Jindal (President)	1925	Kolkata, India
7.	NVIDIA	Jensen Huang	April 5, 1993	Santa Clara, California
8.	International Copper Association	-	1895	Brussels, Belgium
9.	SBI	Shri Challa Sreenivasulu Setty (Chairman)	1 July, 1955	Mumbai
10.	Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India	-	1999	Hyderabad, Telangana
11.	International Monetary Fund	Kristalina Georgieva (MD)	1944	Washington, USA
12.	Election Commission of India	Rajiv Kumar (CEC)	25 January, 1950	New Delhi, India
13.	World Health Organization	Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (Director-General)	April 7, 1948	Geneva, Switzerland
14.	Asian Development Bank	Masatsugu Asakawa (President)	1966	Manila, Philippines
15.	Indo Tibetan Police Force	Rahul Rasgotra (Director-General)	1962	New Delhi