

CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 2023

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Awards and Honours

Awardee Name	Award Name	Extra Information
Rajindar Singh Dhatt	Points of Light Award	Dhatt demonstrated his dedication to serving his country by joining the British Indian Army during the Second World War.
NLC India	GeM Award in “Timely Payments (CPSEs)”	NLC India Limited, a navratna company under the Ministry of Coal, bagged the GeM award in the category “Timely Payments (CPSEs)” for the year 2023 for its outstanding contribution to improving the reliability of e-market practices in line with the vision of GeM.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi	Grand Cross of Legion of Honour- France’s highest award	Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, France’s highest award by H.E. Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic of France.
Jammu and Kashmir	SKOCH Award 2023	The Jammu & Kashmir Rural Livelihood (JKRL) has received the SKOCH Award under the theme “State of Governance India 2047” in Gold category for its outstanding efforts in creating marketing avenues for Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in the Union Territory.
DD Sports	FIFA Women’s World Cup 2023	DD Sports has partnered with 1Stadia to broadcast the highly anticipated 9th edition of the FIFA Women’s World Cup, bringing joy and excitement to fans.
Kartik Aaryan	The Rising Global Superstar Of Indian Cinema Award	Bollywood actor Kartik Aaryan will be honored with the Rising Global Superstar of Indian Cinema award at the annual awards Gala night of the 14th Indian Film Festival of Melbourne on August 11.
Shankari Chandran	Miles Franklin Literary Award 2023	Ten years ago, Sri Lankan-origin Australian writer Shankari Chandran faced



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		difficulty in getting her debut book published.
Byculla railway station	UNESCO's Asia Pacific Cultural Heritage award	Mumbai's Byculla Railway Station received UNESCO's Asia Pacific Cultural Heritage Award on Monday i.e. 24th July, which was declared in November 2022.
Ratan Tata	Maharashtra govt's first 'Udyog Ratna' award	The Maharashtra Government will confer Tata group Chairman Ratan Tata with the first prestigious Maharashtra Udyog Ratna Award this year, state industries minister Uday Samant announced in the State Legislative Assembly.

Appointments

Name	Designation Name	Extra Information
Gernot Dollner	CEO of the Board of Management	German luxury carmaker Audi AG has announced the appointment of Gernot Dollner as its new CEO. Dollner, currently heading Volkswagen Group's Product and Group Strategy, will succeed Markus Duesmann as Chairman of the Board of Management.
Tushar Mehta	Solicitor General of India	Tushar Mehta, the incumbent Solicitor General of India, has been reappointed for a three-year term by the Appointments Committee of Cabinet (ACC).
Ajit Pawar	Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra	Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar, who took oath as the Deputy chief minister of Maharashtra after joining the Eknath Shinde-led



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		government, is the son of Sharad Pawar's elder brother Anantrao.
M U Nair	National Cybersecurity Coordinator	The government has named Lt Gen M U Nair as the newly appointed National Cybersecurity Coordinator (NCSC).
Kameswar Rao Kodavanti	CFO- SBI Bank	Kameshwar Rao Kodavanti's appointment as CFO of SBI marks a significant milestone in his long and successful career within the banking industry.
Aadhav Arjuna	president of the Basketball Federation of India (BFI)	Aadhav Arjuna, the president of the Tamil Nadu Basketball Association (TNBA), emerged victorious in the election held at Nehru Stadium and secured the position of president of the Basketball Federation of India (BFI).
Sirisha Voruganti	MD & CEO of Lloyds Banking Group's Technology Centre	Lloyds Banking Group, one of the leading UK-based financial services groups has appointed Sirisha Voruganti the chief executive officer and managing director of its new Lloyds Technology Centre, based in Hyderabad, India.
G.K. Satish	board member of Russian Energy Giant Rosneft	Rosneft in its annual general meeting held on June 30 announced the appointment of Indian Oil Corporation director G.K. Satish as a member of its board which consists of total of 11 members.
P Vasudevan	new executive director	The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed P. Vasudevan as executive director. His appointment is effective from July 03, 2023.
Shraddha Kapoor	brand ambassador of Asics	Asics India Private Limited, a sports gear company, has appointed actor Shraddha Kapoor as its new brand ambassador.



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Neeraja Prabhakar	chairman of the RAC of ICAR	B.Neeraja Prabhakar has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) for the ICAR-Indian Institute of Oil Palm Research (IIOPR) located in Pedavegi, Andhra Pradesh.
K Rajaraman	New IFSCA Chairman by Centre	Telecom Secretary K Rajaraman has been selected by the government as the new chairperson of the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA).
Sheikh Talal	President of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA)	Sheikh Talal replaces his older brother Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, who led the OCA for 30 years until 2021 when he was forced to step down after being found guilty of forgery in a court in Geneva and sentenced to at least 13 months in prison.
Sanjiv Puri	chairman & managing director – ITC	In a significant development, the board of ITC Ltd has re-appointed Sanjiv Puri as the company's Chairman and Managing Director for a period of five years.
Abhijit Chakravorty	SBI Card's CEO	SBI Cards & Payment Services (SBI Card), the country's largest pure-play credit card issuer, has appointed Abhijit Chakravorty as MD & CEO.
Neeraj Akhoury	President of Cement Manufacturers' Association	This election occurred at its Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) held on 14th July 2023. Akhoury takes over from K C Jhanwar, Managing Director of UltraTech Cement Limited.
Manoj Yadava	DG of Railway Protection Force	Manoj Yadava, a senior IPS officer from the Haryana cadre, has been designated as the new Director General of the Railway Protection Force (RPF), according to an order from the Personnel Ministry.
Ms Nivruti Rai	MD & CEO of Invest India	Ms Rai is the recipient of the prestigious Nari Shakti Puraskar for her remarkable



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		contributions to the field of technology. Ms Nivruti Rai joins Invest India after an illustrious 29 years at Intel as a global business and technology leader.
Rajay Kumar Sinha	Chief at SBI Capital Markets Limited (SBICAPS).	Sinha, who became a Probationary Officer at SBI in 1991, has now taken over the position of Chief at SBI Capital Markets Limited (SBICAPS), succeeding Amitava Chatterjee.
Adrian Mardell	Jaguar Land Rover - CEO	Tata Motors-owned Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) has appointed Adrian Mardell as Chief Executive Officer for a three-year term.
Sat Pal Bhanoo	Managing Director of Life Insurance Corp	Sat Pal Bhanoo, who currently serves as the Additional Zonal Manager at LIC of India's Zonal Office in Bhopal, has been appointed as the new Managing Director of the company.
Lokesh M	CEO of NOIDA	Newly-appointed Noida Authority Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Lokesh M took charge and held a meeting with officials. The CEO highlighted that industrial growth and a better public hearing system would be his key priorities.
Ashish Jitendra Desai	Chief Justice Of Kerala High Court	In a formal ceremony held at Raj Bhavan, Justice Ashish Jitendra Desai took the oath as the 38th Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court. Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan administered the oath of office to the newly appointed Chief Justice, signifying the commencement of his tenure.
Alok Aradhe	Chief Justice of Telangana High Court	Justice Alok Aradhe sworn in as Chief Justice of



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		Telangana High Court on 23rd July by governor Tamilisai Soundararajan at an event held at Raj Bhavan in Hyderabad.
Lisa Franchetti	first woman to lead US Navy	US President Joe Biden has nominated Admiral Lisa Franchetti to lead the US Navy.
TV Narendran	MD and CEO – Tata Steel	This decision was made based on the ‘Nomination and Remuneration Committee recommendation.
Phangnon Konyak	first woman MP from Nagaland	S Phangnon Konyak, a distinguished BJP leader and Nagaland’s first female Rajya Sabha MP, achieved a historic feat as she took on the role of presiding over the Rajya Sabha.
MD R Seshasayee	Asian Paints – Chairman	R Seshasayee, a Chartered Accountant, embarked on his professional journey with Hindustan Lever Ltd in 1971.
Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya	Chief Justice of Bombay High Court	Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya will succeed the current Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, Justice Nitin Madhukar Jamdar.
G. Kannabiran	National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) – Director	Throughout his career, he has held various leadership positions, including the Dean of Research and Consultancy, and Director-in-Charge at NIT Trichy and NIT Puducherry.



Banking & Finance

Piramal Finance opens its first all-women branch in Kochi

Piramal Finance, a leading housing finance company, has taken a significant step towards empowering women by opening its first all-women branch called “Maitreyi” in Tripunithura, a suburban area in Kochi.

This strategic expansion initiative aims to cater to the unique needs of female customers and tap into the growing market potential. With plans to open branches in **Jaipur, Mumbai, Mohali, and New Delhi**, **Piramal Finance** is reinforcing its commitment to providing financial services to women across India.

First ever “Credit Guarantee Scheme” for Livestock Sector launched for rebooting rural economy by leveraging MSMEs

The Indian government has introduced a pioneering “Credit Guarantee Scheme” for the Livestock Sector aimed at revitalizing the rural economy and empowering Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD) has established a Credit Guarantee Fund Trust of Rs 750 crore to provide credit guarantee coverage to eligible lending institutions, enabling improved access to finance for the underserved livestock sector.

Digital Personal Data Protection Bill 2023 approved by the Cabinet

The **Union Government** approved the draft **Digital Personal Data Bill** and come before Parliament in the monsoon season.

Sources in the government said the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology received and considered 21,666 suggestions for the draft bill that have been circulated for comments in November 2022.

Max Life Insurance Partners With DCB Bank to Offer Comprehensive Range of Life Insurance Solutions

Max Life Insurance Company Ltd. has announced a strategic partnership with **DCB Bank Ltd.**, a new-generation private sector bank in India.

The collaboration aims to provide a diverse range of life insurance products to DCB Bank’s customers, including term, savings, and retirement plans, enabling them to secure their financial future and expand their investment portfolio.

Max Life Insurance and DCB Bank: Important Development

Max Life Insurance and DCB Bank join hands to offer a comprehensive range of life insurance solutions to customers. The partnership aims to leverage DCB Bank’s extensive reach and customer-centric approach, along with Max Life’s expertise in protection and long-term savings solutions.



By combining their strengths, the two organizations aim to deliver superior customer experience, digital servicing, and an **omnichannel approach**.

Razorpay launches first international payment gateway in Malaysia

India's renowned fintech giant and leading **Full-Stack Payments and Business Banking Platform, Razorpay**, has made a significant announcement regarding its first-ever international Payment Gateway for the Malaysian market as it acquires Malaysian fintech start-up 'Curlec' for \$20 million, which has been rebranded as '**Curlec by Razorpay**'.

The introduction of the Curlec Payment Gateway aims to bridge the gap between local and international payment gateways, while also addressing the unique digital payment challenges prevalent in emerging markets.

HDFC Bank breaks into \$100 billion market-cap club as world's 7th largest lender

HDFC Bank, **India's largest private lender**, has achieved a significant milestone by **entering the \$100 billion market-capitalization club**. This accomplishment came after its reverse merger with its parent company, HDFC Ltd.

Despite this achievement, the bank currently ranks third on the Indian stock exchanges, trailing behind Reliance Industries (RIL) and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).

RBI, Central Bank of UAE sign two MoUs for trade in local currencies

On July 15, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Central Bank of UAE (CBUAE)** signed two **Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** aimed at bolstering economic ties between the two nations.

The MoUs focus on promoting the use of local currencies for cross-border transactions and interlinking their payment systems, including the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) with the **Instant Payment Platform (IPP) of UAE**.

Indian Affairs

India's first-ever report on Critical Minerals for India unveils

India has taken a significant step towards enhancing its strategic resource security by officially releasing its **first-ever critical minerals list**.

The list comprises 30 key minerals that are crucial for India's economic growth, technological development and pursuit of a **net-zero future**.

This move aims to reduce import dependence, enhance supply-chain resilience, and support the country's vision of an Atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India).



National Anti-Doping Agency, India (NADA India) signs a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with South Asia Regional Anti-Doping Organization (SARADO) in New Delhi

NADA India signed an MoU with SARADO, comprising of **Anti-Doping Organizations of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka**, at the NADA India – SARADO Cooperation Meet in New Delhi, in the presence of Shri Anurag Singh Thakur Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports and Information & Broadcasting, Government of India, Ms. Sujata Chaturvedi, Secretary (Sports), Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India, **SARADO** Secretariat & Member Country Representatives of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

Government of India reduces the GST rate on an electronic item

The Union Finance Ministry recently announced a reduction in the **Goods and Services Tax (GST)** for electronic items on the sixth anniversary of the GST implementation on July 1.

The list of electronic products includes mobile phones, **TVs up to 27 inches**, refrigerators, washing machines, and others. With the aim of making home appliances more affordable, the Finance Ministry has lowered the GST rates for various items.

Refrigerators, washing machines, fans, coolers, geysers, and similar products will now be subject to a reduced GST rate of 18 percent, previously at 31.3 percent.

PM Modi Chairs 23rd SCO Summit

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has described terrorism as a threat to regional and global peace and called upon **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** countries to fight this menace together.

Addressing the SCO virtual summit today, Mr Modi said some countries are using cross-border terrorism as an instrument of their policies and SCO countries should not hesitate to criticize such nations.

Mr. Modi underlined that there should be no double standards on terrorism. He also said India's concerns and expectations regarding Afghanistan are similar to those of most SCO countries.

Mr. Modi added that it is necessary that the land of Afghanistan is not used to spread instability in neighboring countries or encourage extremist ideologies.

India launched international Big Cat Alliance for conserving 7 big cats

India has recently launched the **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)** with the aim of conserving seven major big cat species on Earth.

Inspired by the success of Project Tiger, which has contributed to **India being home to 70% of the world's tigers**, the **IBCA** will focus on protecting and conserving key big cat species, including **Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Puma, Jaguar, and Cheetah**.



The idea for the alliance originated in July 2019, when Prime Minister Modi called for a coalition of global leaders to join forces against poaching and illegal wildlife trade in Asia on Global Tiger Day.

India Mobile Congress 2023 to be held in Pragati Maidan

The **seventh edition of India Mobile Congress (IMC) 2023**, Asia's premier digital technology exhibition, will take place from 27 October to 30 October at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

This year, 7th edition of **India Mobile Congress (IMC)** will take place at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi from 27 October to 30 October 2023.

The event is co-hosted by the Department of Telecommunications and Cellular Operators Association of India.

The theme of India Mobile Congress 2023 is 'Global Digital Innovation.'

Missile Man of India' APJ Abdul Kalam death anniversary is observed on July 27

27th July is celebrated as death anniversary of Missile Man of India APJ Abdul Kalam. 27th July 2023 is celebrated as **8th death anniversary of APJ Abdul Kalam**.

After graduation, Abdul Kalam joined the Aeronautical Development Establishment of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) as a scientist after becoming a member of the Defence Research and Development Service.

He started his career by designing a small hovercraft, however, remained unconvinced by his job at **DRDO**.

In 1969, he was transferred to the **Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)** as a project director of India's first Satellite Launch Vehicle.

APJ Abdul Kalam also invited by Raja Ramanna to witness the country's first nuclear test, Smiling Buddha, as the representative of the TBRL, even though he has not participated in the development.

Presidency

Kalam served as the 11th President of India by winning the 2002 presidential election with an **electoral vote of 922,884**. His term lasted from 25th July 2002 to 25th July 2007.

India to host ASEAN Countries Conference on Traditional Medicines

India will serve as the host of the **ASEAN Countries Conference on Traditional Medicines on July 20, 2023, at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi**.



A total of 75 participants will convene at this one-day conference which will include international delegates from eight ASEAN countries, with an additional two international delegates participating virtually.

The purpose of the conference is to facilitate brainstorming sessions and idea-sharing on the topic of Traditional Medicines.

Cabinet Approves Changes to Jan Vishwas Bill to Decriminalize Offences in 42 Laws

The **Union Cabinet** has reportedly approved amendments to the **Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2023**.

The proposed changes aim to decriminalize minor offences by amending 183 provisions across **42 Acts administered by 19 ministries**. The objective is to promote ease of doing business and reduce the backlog of court cases.

The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill was initially introduced by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal in the Lok Sabha on December 22, 2022.

It was later referred to a joint committee of parliament, which engaged in detailed discussions with the ministries and departments involved.

The committee adopted its report in March 2023, which was presented before the **Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha**.

Indian Railways offers ₹20 economy meal menu for general category passengers

Indian Railway has taken an effective initiative to provide the passengers of the general coaches with an economical meal at an affordable price of Rs.20 and snacks would cost **Rs.50** with glasses of water of 200ml at affordable prices.

Indian Railway will provide healthy and hygienic food to the passengers of the general coaches at an affordable price in order to expand their food and beverage services.

The passengers are provided with the economic meal at **Rs.20 and snacks at Rs.50**. at the service counter located near the general coach at the platforms.

NADA India signs MoU with SARADO in New Delhi

National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) India and the **South Asia Regional Anti-Doping Organization (SARADO)** joined forces through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at strengthening regional cooperation in **anti-doping efforts**.

The signing took place at the NADA India – SARADO Cooperation Meet in New Delhi, in the **presence of Shri Anurag Singh Thakur, Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports and Information & Broadcasting**, Government of India, and other distinguished delegates.

3-Day International Conference on Green Hydrogen begins in New Delhi



ICGH 2023 provides a platform for fostering partnerships to realize our vision of a clean and green planet: Prime Minister

The government will partner with the industry in developing cutting-edge technology for a green hydrogen ecosystem: Union Power and New & Renewable Energy Minister

Union Power & NRE Minister cautions developed countries against putting barriers such as high subsidies for the growth of Green Hydrogen

Draft Inter-ministerial R&D Roadmap for Green Hydrogen Ecosystem Ready: **Principal Scientific Advisor**

“ICGH 2023 will enable us to better plan the implementation of National Green Hydrogen Mission”: New & Renewable Energy Secretary

Strategic Hydrogen Innovation Partnership on PPP Model to Steer Applied and Breakthrough Research in Green Hydrogen Technologies.

India's first 'Police Drone Unit' launched in Chennai

The **Greater Chennai City Police (GCP)** has launched the **'Police Drone Unit'** for aerial surveillance over vast areas and quick detection of criminal activities.

The project, which costs approximately Rs 3.6 crore according to a press release by the GCP, was inaugurated by outgoing Tamil Nadu Director General of Police (DGP) C Sylendra Babu, in the presence of Chennai Police Commissioner Shankar Jaiswal at Besant Avenue, Adyar.

PM Modi launches National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated the **National Sickle Cell Anemia Eradication Mission(NSCAEM) 2047** in Shahdol, Madhya Pradesh.

The mission aims to **tackle the challenges posed by sickle cell disease**, particularly among the tribal population in India. PM Modi also unveiled a portal and released guidelines for disease management, along with different monitoring modules.

Indian Government Mandates Air-Conditioned Truck Cabins

The Indian government has taken a significant step towards improving working conditions for **truck drivers** by issuing a draft notification mandating the installation of air-conditioning systems in truck cabins.

This move aims to address concerns related to driver fatigue and enhance road safety.

The draft notification specifies that the installation of air-conditioning systems will be mandatory for motor vehicles belonging to categories N2 and N3.



Effective from January 1, 2025, onwards, this requirement aims to provide a comfortable working environment for truck drivers during their long journeys.

Ayushman Bhav Programme

The Union health ministry is preparing to introduce a comprehensive health initiative named ‘**Ayushman Bhav,**’ with the goal of ensuring effective implementation of all state-run health schemes to reach each intended recipient.

With a focus on comprehensive coverage and inclusion, the program is set to revolutionize healthcare access in the country.

Ayushman Bhav Program Activities

Under the Ayushman Bhav program, several activities have been planned to enhance healthcare accessibility and awareness. These activities include:

1. **Ayushman Apke Dwar 3.0**
2. **Ayushman Sabha**
3. **Ayushman Mela**
4. **Ayushman Gram**

Semicon India 2023

‘**Semicon India 2023**’ is all set to emerge as a prestigious platform, celebrating India’s prowess in the semiconductor domain.

Scheduled to be held in Gandhinagar on July 28, the event promises to bring together leading companies, policymakers, and industry stalwarts to showcase India’s remarkable progress in the semiconductor sector.

Leading Companies Participating

Foxconn, Micron, AMD, IBM, Marvell, Vedanta, LAM Research, NXP Semiconductors, and STMicroelectronics are some of the distinguished participants who will grace ‘Semicon India 2023.’

Their attendance underscores the importance of the summit, as it puts a spotlight on India’s rapid progress in nurturing a worldwide semiconductor manufacturing and design ecosystem.

Bengaluru Becomes 1st Indian City to Join World Cities Culture Forum

Bengaluru, the capital of Karnataka became the first Indian city to be part of the **World Cities Culture Forum (WCCF)**, a global network of cities that share research and intelligence to explore the role of culture in future prosperity.

Bengaluru became the 41st city to join the forum and the network currently includes 40 cities across six continents. The forum includes cities like New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, and Dubai.



State related Affairs

India's First Indigenous 700 MW Nuclear Reactor Starts Commercial Operation in Gujarat

India's first indigenously developed 700 MW nuclear power reactor at the **Kakrapar Atomic Power Project (KAPP)** in Gujarat has successfully commenced commercial operations, marking a significant milestone in the country's nuclear energy sector.

The reactor, known as KAPP-3, began operating at 90 percent of its total power capacity on June 30, 2023, as confirmed by a senior official from KAPP.

Indore Municipal Corporation to be the first urban body to get EPR credit

Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) in Madhya Pradesh, India, has made history by becoming the first urban body in the country to receive Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR) credit for recycling banned single-use plastic items.

Indore has implemented a complete ban on single-use plastic items within the city. In recent times, the IMC seized approximately eight tonnes of such plastic, preventing its circulation.

Moreover, **Indore** has also been recognized as **India's cleanest city for the sixth consecutive year** in the central government's annual cleanliness survey.

Bihar Surpasses Tamil Nadu as State with Highest Microlending Borrowings

Bihar has overtaken **Tamil Nadu** to become the state with the **highest microlending borrowings in India as of March 2023**, according to a report released.

The report, published by credit information company Crif High Mark, highlighted Bihar's impressive growth with a 13.5 percent increase in the gross lending portfolio during the March quarter compared to the previous quarter.

India, ADB sign \$295 million loan to upgrade state highways in Bihar

The **Indian government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)** have joined hands once again to enhance infrastructure in Bihar.

Through a \$295-million loan, the project aims to upgrade approximately **265 km** of state highways in Bihar, incorporating climate and disaster-resilient designs and road safety measures.

The initiative aligns with the **Bihar government's vision** to improve all state highways to standard two-lane widths and prioritize road safety.



Additionally, the upgraded roads are expected to boost connectivity in impoverished rural regions, improving access to essential services like health, education, and markets, ultimately enhancing the well-being of the people.

Gujarat government doubles insurance cover

The state government of Gujarat has taken a significant step towards improving healthcare access for its citizens by doubling the insurance coverage under the **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)**.

Starting from the 11th of July, beneficiaries of PMJAY in Gujarat will now receive an insurance **cover of Rs 10 lakhs**, a twofold rise from the previous coverage of Rs 5 lakhs. This decision by the state government aims to benefit approximately **1.78 crore Ayushman Bharat** card holders in Gujarat, enhancing their access to quality medical treatment.

CMV and ToMV virus hit tomato crops in Maharashtra and Karnataka

Tomato farmers in Maharashtra and Karnataka have attributed the decline in their yields earlier this year to two distinct viruses.

Those in Maharashtra reported that their tomato crops were adversely affected by the **cucumber mosaic virus (CMV)**, whereas growers in Karnataka and other South Indian states attributed their losses to the **tomato mosaic virus (ToMV)**.

In the past three years, farmers cultivating tomatoes have observed a rise in the prevalence of these two viruses, resulting in varying degrees of crop damage, ranging from partial to total loss.

Athoor betel leaves from Tamil Nadu receives GI certificate

The Tamil Nadu State Agriculture Marketing Board and NABARD Madurai Agribusiness Incubation Forum have awarded a Geographical Indication (GI) certificate to the Athoor betel leaves from Thoothukudi district in Tamil Nadu.

The certificate is granted in the name of Athoor Vattara Vetrilai Vivasayigal Sangam.

This GI recognition opens up new avenues for marketing the Athoor betel leaves, enabling their reach in both domestic and international markets, tapping into their marketing potential.

Telangana High Court Declares Telangana Eunuchs Act Unconstitutional: A Victory for Transgender Rights

The Telangana High Court recently made a landmark judgment, declaring the **Telangana Eunuchs Act unconstitutional**.

The Act, which had been in place since 1919, was deemed discriminatory and a violation of the human rights of the transgender community.



The court's decision has significant implications for the recognition and protection of **transgender rights in Telangana**.

Why in the News:

The Telangana Eunuchs Act came under scrutiny after a **public interest litigation (PIL)** filed by **Vyjayanthi Vasanta Mogli**, who argued that the Act was discriminatory and lacked legal support.

The High Court bench, consisting of Chief Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Justice CV Bhaskar Reddy, concurred with the petitioner's claims and struck down the Act on July 6, 2023.

India gets its 36th and Tamil Nadu its first flying training school

India's aviation education landscape has witnessed a significant boost with the recent approval of the first **Flying Training Organisation (FTO)** in Tamil Nadu by the **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)**.

EKVI Air Training Organization Pvt Ltd has been granted permission to operate from Salem Airport, marking a significant milestone for aspiring pilots in the region.

The approval of **EKVI Air Training Organization Pvt Ltd** brings new hope and opportunities for aspiring pilots in Tamil Nadu.

With access to professional training programs, students can now embark on a journey toward fulfilling their dreams of becoming skilled aviators.

The FTO's comprehensive training curriculum will encompass theoretical classes, flight simulator sessions, and practical flight experience, ensuring a well-rounded education that prepares students for the dynamic aviation industry.

Tamil Nadu topped NITI Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2022

The **third edition of the NITI Aayog's Export Preparedness Index 2022** has released on **17th July 2023**. According to the report, out of the 680 districts engaged in exports, the top 100 districts contribute about 87% of the total exports from India.

To promote exports, **647 districts** have formed a District Export Promotion Committee, while 557 have formulated a District Export Action Plan.

According to the Export Preparedness Index 2022, **Tamil Nadu topped** the ranking with an overall score of 80.89 while Maharashtra with a score of 78.20 was second and Karnataka was third with a score of 76.36.

Gujarat scored fourth position with a score of 73.22 followed by Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal, and Kerala in the ranking of coastal areas.



International Affairs

New Zealand becomes the first country to ban plastic produce bags

New Zealand has taken a momentous step towards reducing plastic waste by becoming the first country to implement a complete ban on thin plastic bags commonly used in supermarkets for fruit and vegetable purchases.

Moreover, this move will extend beyond bags, as it also includes the banning of plastic straws and silverware.

This significant move aligns with the government's ongoing campaign against single-use plastics, which began in 2019 with the prohibition of thicker plastic shopping bags.

Meta's Threads App

Meta, formerly known as Facebook, has recently developed a new app called **Threads to compete with Twitter**. However, the launch of the app in the European Union (EU) has been postponed due to regulatory concerns.

Meta's Threads app, designed to provide a platform for discussions and community engagement, is currently not being launched in the EU.

The company's decision stems from regulatory concerns regarding compliance with the DMA, a framework introduced to address the dominance of large digital platforms and ensure fair competition within the digital market.

Twitter replaces iconic bird logo with 'X'

Elon Musk, owner of Twitter launched the new logo of **Twitter 'X'** by replacing the iconic bird logo. The "X" logo has been in the pipeline for a while with Musk's strong want of an "everything app".

Before he bought Twitter for \$44 billion, Musk described the platform as "**an accelerant to creating X, the everything app**" – something he plans to launch eventually.

What's in News?

Elon Musk announced on 23rd July that he has a plan to change the logo of twitter and by following his announcement on Monday morning he replaced the iconic bird logo with a white 'X' with black background.

The domain X.com is now being redirected to Twitter.

Israel parliament approves bill that limits Supreme Court power

Israel's parliament has given approval to a bill that would limit the powers of the Supreme Court.



The vote resulted in a **64 to 56 majority in favor of the limits**, with **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's** far-right governing coalition overpowering the opposition.

Anti-government protestors were forcibly removed from the building ahead of the vote which led to a police complaint against them.

UAE becomes the first Arab country to get observer status in Asian-Pacific Money Laundering

UAE or the United Arab Emirates is participating with observer status in the plenary of the **Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG)**, a **Financial Action Task Force-Style regional body (FSRB)**, taking place this week in Vancouver, Canada.

The UAE is the first Arab country to be granted observer status at the APG. The UAE has placed international cooperation at the heart of its strategy and plans for countering money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Observer status at FSRB events is granted to countries that demonstrate an active and collaborative approach to fighting financial crime, which the UAE has displayed through its participation in **MENAFATF** and other multilateral organisations.

'An Era Of Equality: ICC historic decision for Women's cricket equal pay

ICC announcing equal pay for men's and women's cricket tournaments is a major milestone in the women's game.

In a groundbreaking announcement, 13 July, prize money parity was declared for men's and women's teams at ICC events.

Meeting in Durban, South Africa, the ICC announced that equal prize money will now be given to women and men cricketers.

According to ICC Chairman Greg Barclay, it is an important moment in the history of our game that male and female cricketers competing in ICC's global competitions will now be rewarded equally.

The decision was taken at the ICC Annual Conference in Durban, South Africa and ensures the ICC Board fulfilled its commitment to reaching prize money equity by 2030 well ahead of schedule.

Saudi Arabia becomes 51st country to sign ASEAN's TAC

Jakarta, Indonesia – On the sidelines of the **56th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM)** in Jakarta, Saudi Arabia has officially become the 51st country to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC).

The accession signing ceremony took place on July 12, and Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi, on behalf of ASEAN, expressed her appreciation to Saudi Arabia for joining the treaty.



India supports U.N. on Black Sea initiative

India has thrown its weight behind the United Nations' efforts to continue the Black Sea Grain initiative and has called for a swift resolution to the impasse.

The Black Sea Initiative holds significant importance for Ukraine's agricultural sector, known as "Europe's breadbasket," which faces disruptions due to the Russian invasion in February 2022.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 disrupted the Black Sea trade route, historically responsible for 90% of Ukraine's grain exports.

This interference, coupled with other challenges like droughts and COVID-19 supply disruptions, put immense pressure on the global food supply, leading to fears of a potential hunger crisis and surging food prices.

Russia bans sex change and transgender marriages

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed new legislation that deals a significant blow to the **LGBTQ+ community** in the country.

The act, passed unanimously by both houses of parliament, strictly prohibits individuals from officially or medically changing their gender, further marginalizing Russia's embattled LGBTQ+ population.

WHO identifies the first case of MERS-CoV in UAE this year

According to WHO, the first case of **Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-COV)** has been identified in a 28-year-old male from United Arab Emirates (UAE).

WHO has identified the first case of MERS-CoV in a 28-year-old male from the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)**. WHO stated that the patient is a resident of AI Ain City in Abu Dhabi. He had no travel history and had not come in direct or indirect contact with dromedaries (camels), goats, or sheep.

The first case of MERS-CoV was reported in UAE in 2013. To date, UAE has reported 94 confirmed cases and 12 deaths. Globally, the total number of cases of MERS-CoV since 2012 is 2,605 including 936 associated deaths.

The Bank of Israel joins the International Committee on Credit Reporting (ICCR)

On 13th July, the World Bank issued official approval for the Bank of Israel to join the **International Committee on Credit Reporting (ICCR)**, which consists of worldwide committees on credit reporting.

In November 2022, at the winter meeting of the **International Committee on Credit Reporting (ICCR)**, it was decided to approve the Bank of Israel's accession as a member of the organization by a unanimous vote.



Rajkot International Airport

Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated Rajkot International Airport and various development initiatives amounting to over Rs 860 crores in **Rajkot**, Gujarat.

This ambitious airport project holds the promise of transforming the region's transportation infrastructure and contributing to the local industry's development.

The construction of the Rajkot International Airport has been a substantial undertaking, with a total cost of **approximately ₹1,500 crore**.

This significant financial commitment highlights the government's determination to provide world-class infrastructure to the region.

The airport has been developed on a sprawling land area of more than 2500 acres, emphasizing its grand scale and capacity.

Foreign Relations

India-UK Electric Propulsion Technical Workshop held in New Delhi

An **India-UK Electric Propulsion Technical Workshop** to foster collaboration, exchange knowledge, and explore the exciting possibilities in the field of electric propulsion was organized in New Delhi on 3 July 2023.

The day-long workshop was co-chaired by **Shri Rajeev Prakash, Joint Secretary (Naval Systems)** from the Indian side, and Commodore John Voyce, Naval Base Commander Portsmouth from the UK side.

The workshop served as a crucial platform for experts, researchers, and industry professionals from both countries to come together, share insights, and engage in meaningful discussions on the development of electric propulsion for ships.

India and Indonesia to launch “India – Indonesia Economic and Financial Dialogue”

Nirmala Sitharaman, during the G20 **Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBG)** meeting in Gandhinagar, announced the commencement of the “**India – Indonesia Economic and Financial Dialogue.**”

This dialogue intends to strengthen cooperation and promote mutual understanding on global issues between the two nations. It will serve as a platform for discussing shared interests and exploring mutually beneficial matters.

3rd Working Group meeting on military cooperation between Indian-Russian held



The 3rd meeting of the Working Group on Military Cooperation of the **Indian-Russian Intergovernmental Commission** on Military and Military-Technical Cooperation was held from 18–19 July 2023 at Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi.

The meeting was co-chaired by Lt. Gen Johnson P Mathew, Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to **Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee (CISC)**, HQ-IDS, and Lt. Gen Dylevsky Igor Nikolaevich, Deputy Chief of the Main Operational Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.

The meeting was conducted in a friendly warm and cordial atmosphere.

PFC becomes the first member from India to join the Asia Transition Finance Study Group

Power Finance Corporation Ltd(PFC) has achieved a milestone by becoming the first Indian participant in the Asia Transition Finance Study Group (ATFSG), an initiative spearheaded by the Japanese **Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI)** to promote sustainable transition finance in Asian countries.

By becoming a part of this initiative, PFC will contribute to India's perspective and collaborate on devising policy considerations to facilitate efficient energy transition financing.

'India AI' and Meta, India sign MoU to foster advancements in AI & Emerging Technologies

In order to foster collaboration in the field of AI and Emerging Technologies, '**India AI**' – an **IBD** under Digital India Corporation and Meta, India have signed an MoU here today.

The MoU was signed by Abhishek Singh, CEO of India AI, and Shivnath Thukral, Director & Head of Public Policy, at Meta in India.

The objective of the MoU is to establish a framework for collaboration and cooperation between '**India AI**' and Meta in the field of Artificial Intelligence & Emerging Technologies including to make Meta's open-source AI models available for use by the Indian AI ecosystem.

India donates \$1 million to promote Hindi at the UN

India has donated **\$1 million to the United Nations** to support the promotion of the Hindi language.

Melissa Fleming, the Global Communications under-secretary-general, expressed gratitude to @IndiaUNNewYork and @ruchirakamboj for their generous investment in the @UNinHindi service, aimed at delivering UN news and stories to Hindi-speaking audiences in India and beyond.

Japan becomes second Quad partner to sign semiconductor pact with India



In a significant move, India and Japan have solidified their partnership by signing an agreement to jointly develop the semiconductor ecosystem.

The deal aims to bolster the resilience of the global supply chain, particularly in the crucial semiconductor industry. This marks Japan as the second Quad partner, after the United States, to join hands with India in this endeavor.

India, and Malaysia can now trade in the Indian rupee

The **Ministry of External Affairs** declared that trade between **India and Malaysia** can now be conducted using the **Indian Rupee (INR)** as a mode of settlement, in addition to other currencies.

This announcement follows the launch of the **Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023** by the Ministry of Commerce the day before, which reaffirmed the government's determination to establish the rupee as a global currency.

This move is expected to boost bilateral trade between the two countries and reduce transaction costs for businesses.

India & Panama signs MoU on Electoral Cooperation

The **Election Commission of India and the Electoral Tribunal (ET)** of Panama today signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Panama City to establish the institutional framework for their ongoing cooperation in the field of election management and administration.

A three-member ECI delegation led by **Chief Election Commissioner of India Shri Rajiv Kumar** held interactions with the Presiding Magistrate, Electoral Tribunal of Panama Mr. Alfredo Juncá Wendehake on strengthening collaboration and knowledge exchange between the two Election Management Bodies (EMBs).

Mr. Eduardo Valdes Escoffery, first vice presidential magistrate and Mr. Luis A. Guerra Morales, second vice presidential magistrate, ET of Panama were also present.

PM Modi to be guest of honor for French military parade

Indian Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has been invited as the guest of honor for **France's Bastille Day celebrations**, which will take place on July 14.

The Bastille Day military parade will witness the participation of Indian forces, emphasizing the strengthening strategic alliance between France and India

India-UAE: Joint Statement on Climate Change

Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, and His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) recognized the urgent need to address the global challenge of climate change through global collective action while



respecting the foundational principles and obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on the Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement.

The leaders committed to enhancing cooperation on climate ambition, decarbonization, and clean energy, and working together to have tangible and meaningful outcomes from the 28th Session of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties.

India-Tanzania Defence Cooperation

During the recent visit of **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to Tanzania**, significant developments took place in the defense cooperation between India and Tanzania.

These engagements highlight India's commitment to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's doctrine of **SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)**.

As part of the visit, the guided missile frigate INS Trishul visited the ports of Zanzibar and Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

Notably, INS Trishul conducted India's first-ever Joint **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)** surveillance with the Tanzanian Navy. This joint surveillance strengthens maritime security and cooperation between the two countries.

India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway Project

The **external minister of India S. Jaishankar** met his Myanmar counterpart Tha Swe to discuss the expeditions projects especially the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway and the challenges faced in the smooth implementation of the project.

India-Myanmar-Thailand Highway is a significant regional connectivity project that aims to establish a road link between India, Myanmar, and Thailand.

India hands over INS Kirpan to Vietnam in landmark move

Indian Naval Ship Kirpan, a corvette that served the **Indian Navy for 32 years**, has been decommissioned and handed over to the Vietnam People's Navy (VPN) in a ceremony held at Cam Ranh, Vietnam.

The momentous occasion marked the first time India has transferred a fully operational corvette to a **foreign country**.

The handover of INS Kirpan signifies the deepening defence ties between **India and Vietnam**.

India has consistently bolstered its defence partnership with Vietnam, reflecting the shared concern about China's growing maritime power in the Indo-Pacific region.

Algeria applies to join BRICS, would contribute \$1.5 bln to group bank



Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune announced that Algeria has formally submitted an application to join the **BRICS group of nations**.

The move aims to create new economic prospects for the **oil and gas-rich nation in North Africa**, as it seeks to diversify its economy and strengthen ties with countries like China.

In its bid to join the BRICS group, Algeria has not only submitted an application but also sought to become a shareholder member of the **BRICS Bank**.

The nation has pledged a substantial **contribution of \$1.5 billion to the bank**, a move aimed at reinforcing its position and influence within the bloc.

Israel's Controversial Judicial Reform Bill

Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu passed Controversial **Judicial Reform Bill** to limit the Supreme Court's ability to overturn decisions made by the government ministers.

Israel has recently passed Controversial Judicial Reform Bill to limit the Supreme Court's ability to overturn the decisions made by the government ministers. The new measure was passed by 64-0 votes as the opposition lawmakers stormed out of the chamber and refrained from voting.

Business News

Visa's \$1 Billion Acquisition of Brazilian Fintech Startup Pismo Expands Its Presence in Latin America

Visa, the world's largest payments processor, has announced its acquisition of Brazilian fintech platform Pismo for \$1 billion in cash.

This move aims to enhance **Visa's footprint in Latin America** and demonstrates renewed confidence in the region amidst a slowdown in funding.

Expanding Footprint in Latin America

Visa's acquisition of Pismo represents the company's first major takeover since its purchase of European open banking platform Tink for \$2.2 billion and British cross-border payments provider Currencycloud in 2021.

REC extends ₹ 4,785 Crore for HPCL Rajasthan Refinery's project in Barmer

REC Limited has extended a loan of **₹ 4,785 crores to HPCL Rajasthan Refinery Limited (HRRL)**, for setting up a green field refinery cum petrochemical complex in Barmer district, Rajasthan.



The loan has been extended as part of a consortium arrangement for ₹ 48,625 crores, wherein the share of REC Limited is ₹ 4,785 crores.

The refinery cum complex will have a capacity of **9 Million Metric Tonnes per Annum (MMTA)** and would entail a total project cost of ₹ 72,937 crores.

Bharat 6G Alliance

The Telecom sector is a dynamic and rapidly evolving industry with continuous technological advancements. To spearhead the development of indigenous technology and take the lead in **6G technology**, the **Bharat 6G Alliance (B6GA)** has emerged as a crucial collaborative platform.

Focus on Indigenous Technology and 6G Leadership

The primary objective of the Bharat 6G Alliance is to foster the development of indigenous technology and secure a prominent position in the **realm of 6G technology**.

By bringing together public and private companies, academia, research institutions, and standards development organizations, the alliance aims to drive innovation and propel India's growth in this futuristic field.

Dell joins Intel to launch AI skills lab in India

Dell Technologies and Intel have joined forces to establish an **artificial intelligence (AI) lab at Telangana Institute**.

The partnership aims to bridge the digital skills gap and empower students at Lords Institute of Engineering & Technology in **Telangana** by integrating Intel's 'AI for Youth program into their curriculum.

This initiative seeks to prepare students for the industry with the necessary expertise for the future job market and foster an AI-ready ecosystem on campus.

Navantia and L&T Collaborate for Indian Navy's P75 (I) Submarine Program Bid

Spain's Navantia and Larsen & Toubro (L&T) have entered into a Teaming Agreement (TA) for the **Indian Navy's prestigious P75 (India)** submarine program.

The signing of the agreement took place in the presence of SN Subrahmanyam, CEO & MD of L&T, and Augustin Alvarez Blanco, Naval Construction Vice President and Member of the Board at Navantia.

This collaboration marks an important milestone in India's defense acquisition.

CarTrade Tech to acquire OLX India's auto business for ₹537 cr



On 10th July in a stock exchange filing, **CarTrade Tech** announced it will acquire a **100% stake in Sobek Auto Pvt Ltd.** the entity which bought OLX India's Auto-motive business for cash consideration.

This acquisition will likely be completed in 21-30 days. The company which had raised funds from investors such as Temasek Holdings and Tiger Global prior to its public offering in 2021 had 1185 crore cash and cash equivalents on its books on a standalone basis.

The main objective behind the acquisition of the OLX business is to provide synergistic benefits to the existing business of CarTrade Tech.

Nokia and TSSC launch 5G skill development center in Gujarat

In partnership with the **Telecom Sector Skill Council (TSSC)** and Kaushalya-The Skill University, Nokia has announced the establishment of a 5G skill development center in Gujarat.

The **Center of Excellence (CoE)** at ITI Kubernagar will establish a skill Lab dedicated to training individuals in 5G technology skills.

The primary objective is to offer job placements to at least 70 percent of learners within 4-6 weeks after completing the course. In the first year of the project, approximately 300 candidates will benefit from this program.

Balvantsinh Rajput, the Cabinet Minister for Labour and Employment in the state, presided over the inauguration ceremony of the 5G skill development center.

Surat Diamond Bourse: India's Gem Capital Overtakes US with World's Largest Office

Surat, Gujarat, the gem capital of India, has **surpassed the United States** by hosting the world's largest office building – the 'Surat Diamond Bourse.'

Replacing the iconic Pentagon in the US, this interconnected office structure features nine rectangular buildings emanating from a central "spine."

Boasting a vast floor space of 7.1 million square feet, the **Surat Diamond Bourse** now holds the crown as the largest office building globally, dethroning the Pentagon, which held this title for almost 80 years.

Mahindra & Mahindra confirms buying 3.53% stake in RBL Bank for ₹417 crores

On July 26, 2023, Mahindra & Mahindra, a prominent Indian conglomerate, confirmed its investment in **RBL Bank** by acquiring a 3.53% stake for ₹417 crores.

The acquisition was announced through a regulatory filing, and **Mahindra & Mahindra** expressed its potential to make further investments in RBL Bank, subject to pricing, regulatory approvals, and required procedures.

However, the company clarified that it would not exceed a **stake of 9.9%**.



Jio Financial and BlackRock Announce Joint Venture to Revolutionize India's Mutual Fund Market

Jio Financial Services Ltd (JFS) of the Reliance Industries Ltd Group and global asset manager **BlackRock** have joined forces to create a groundbreaking 50:50 joint venture called “**Jio BlackRock.**”

This strategic partnership aims to provide millions of Indian investors with access to affordable and innovative investment solutions through technology-enabled platforms.

The joint venture plans to invest \$150 million each, positioning itself as a significant player in India's thriving mutual fund industry, which is currently dominated by **SBI Mutual Fund, ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund, and HDFC Mutual Fund.**

Ranks

Haryana emerged champions at the 6th Youth Women's National Boxing Championships

Defending champions **Haryana** continued their domination in the **Women's Youth Nationals**, clinching 9 medals to conclude the 6th youth women's national boxing championship in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

Haryana pulled off a phenomenal show on the final day as all of their **8 finalists** ended up winning the gold medal. With 63 points, 8 gold, and 1 bronze medal Haryana finished top of the table.

Bhawna Sharma (48kg) & Anshu (50kg) were on top of the game as they started off with a convincing 5-0 win over **Karneka Kathayat** of Uttarakhand and Chanchal Choudhary of UP giving Haryana a perfect head start.

4. Tamil Nadu regained the top spot in electronic exports in India

In a significant achievement, **Tamil Nadu** has reclaimed its position as the leader in **electronic exports in India**. The state's electronic exports, valued at **USD 5.37 billion in the 2022-23** financial year, now account for a 23% share of the electronics market.

This remarkable growth can be attributed to various factors such as the establishment of major manufacturing facilities by Tata Electronics and the implementation of the Indian government's production-linked incentives for electronic manufacturing.

Iceland is the world's most peaceful country; check where India stands

The **2023 Global Peace Index (GPI)** recently released its annual ranking of the most peaceful countries in the world.



Put out by the **Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP)**, the 17th edition of the **GPI ranked 163** independent states and territories according to their level of peacefulness.

“This report presents the most comprehensive data-driven analysis to date on trends in peace, its economic value, and how to develop peaceful societies,” the report said.

The GPI covers **163 countries comprising 99.7 percent of the world’s population**, using 23 qualitative and quantitative indicators from highly respected sources. It measures the state of peace across three domains.

HDFC Bank Surpasses SBI in CRISIL’s Corporate Banking Ranking for 2023

In 2023, **HDFC Bank, India’s largest private lender**, achieved a significant milestone by overtaking State Bank of India (SBI) to secure the **top spot in CRISIL’s Greenwich market share Leaders in Large Corporate Banking**.

The report by Coalition Greenwich, a division of CRISIL, highlights the changing dynamics in India’s corporate banking landscape, with larger private and foreign banks gaining traction at the expense of smaller banks, including public sector banks.

HDFC Bank’s remarkable performance in the corporate banking sector enabled it to **outshine State Bank of India (SBI) in CRISIL’s ranking**.

4 Indian-origin biz leaders in 2023 Forbes’ 100 richest self-made women list

The **Forbes 2023 list of America’s 100 most successful women** is released. As many as **four Indian-origin women Jayshree Ullal, Indira Nooyi, Neha Narkhede, and Neerja Sethi** have made it to this coveted list of America’s 100 richest self-made women.

Four Indian-origin women, including Jayshree Ullal and Indra Nooyi, have made it to the Forbes list of America’s 100 most successful self-made women, with a combined net worth of a whopping USD 4.06 billion.

Singapore passport named world’s most powerful, beats Japan

Singapore is the world’s most powerful passport with visa-free access to 192 travel destinations out of 227 around the world, according to Henley Passport Index released on Tuesday.

Germany, Italy, and Spain all move up into second place. Japan has been knocked off the top spot for the first time in five years and bumped into third place.

HDFC Bank becomes 2nd most valuable company; TCS falls to 3rd place

HDFC Bank achieved a significant milestone by surpassing Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) to become the second most valuable company in India based on market capitalization.

The recent merger of its parent company HDFC into itself further bolstered the bank’s position.



HDFC Bank's market capitalization stood at Rs 12,72,718.60 crore, overtaking TCS' valuation of Rs 12,66,891.65 crore on the BSE.

The bank's shares closed at Rs 1,688.50 apiece, registering a slight increase of 0.22% on the BSE.

Defence News

IAF to hold biggest air exercise 'Tarang Shakti'

The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** is set to host its first-ever multi-national air exercise called 'Tarang Shakti' in October-November this year.

With the participation of several nations, including the **United States, United Kingdom, France, and Australia**, this exercise aims to strengthen military cooperation and foster strategic alliances.

'Tarang Shakti' is anticipated to be the largest multi-national air exercise ever hosted by India, showcasing the IAF's commitment to global engagement.

JAPAN INDIA MARITIME EXERCISE 2023 (JIMEX 23)

The seventh edition of the bilateral **Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2023 (JIMEX 23)** hosted by the Indian Navy, is being conducted at/ off Visakhapatnam from 05 -10 July 2023. This edition marks the 11th anniversary of JIMEX, since its inception in 2012.

Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) units under the command of RAdm Nishiyama Takahiro, Commander Escort Flotilla One, and Indian Naval ships under the command of RAdm Gurcharan Singh, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet are participating in the exercise.

Talisman Sabre Exercises 2023

Australia and the United States have initiated the **Talisman Sabre joint military exercises**, a large-scale show of force and unity involving more than 30,000 troops and participants from 11 other countries.

Held every two years, this year's drills mark the largest gathering of military personnel yet. The exercises come at a crucial time when China's assertive influence in the Indo-Pacific region is on the rise.

SALVEX 2023



In a remarkable display of collaboration, the **Indian Navy and the US Navy** recently joined forces for the seventh edition of the **IN-USN Salvage and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) exercise, known as SALVEX**.

Held from June 26th to July 6th, 2023, the vibrant city of Kochi served as the backdrop for this highly anticipated event. SALVEX 2023 marked an important chapter in the history of naval cooperation between India and the US, fostering enhanced interoperability and operational capabilities.

INS Nireekshak: Leading the Way

The Indian naval vessel **INS Nireekshak led the SALVEX 2023** exercise, symbolizing the commitment of the Indian Navy to collaborative training and cooperation.

As a sophisticated diving and EOD support vessel, INS Nireekshak played a crucial role in facilitating joint exercises and knowledge exchange between the two navies.

Indian Tri-Services Contingent in French Bastille Day Parade

Every year on the **14th of July**, France commemorates an important event known as **Bastille Day**. This day holds great significance in French history and marks the anniversary of the Storming of the Bastille in 1789 during the French Revolution.

In recent times, the Bastille Day Parade in France has gained international attention, and this year, India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, has been invited as the Guest of Honour. The Indian Armed Forces will be proudly represented by a tri-services contingent during the parade.

Ashok Leyland bags major orders worth Rs 800 crore from Indian Army

The commercial vehicles manufacturer, Ashok Leyland recently disclosed securing defense contracts valued at Rs 800 Crore.

These contracts entail the supply of specialized 4×4 Field, Artillery Tractors and 6×6 Gun Towing Vehicles to the Indian army within the next 12 months.

The vehicles are designated for use by the Artillery battalions of the Indian army to efficiently tow light and medium guns.

UK-India Defence and Military Technology Cooperation Workshop

In a landmark event, senior government officials, sectoral experts, and industry representatives from India and the UK gathered in London for the **UK-India Defence and Military Technology Cooperation** workshop.

Organized by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in collaboration with India's Bharat Shakti defence platform, the workshop aimed to explore synergies and enhance bilateral cooperation in the defence and military technology sector.



The workshop delved into various vital topics, such as the evolving strategic context of UK-India defence relations.

Science related Affairs

ISRO to transfer SSLV to the private sector

Indian Space Research Organization decided to transfer the SSLV completely to the private sector, not just the manufacturing but full transfer.

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) is going to transfer its Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) to the private sector after conducting two development flights of the rocket that seeks to provide on-demand services to put satellites weighing up to 500kg in a low-earth orbit.

The commercial satellite launch services sector in India is projected to contribute \$13 billion to the economy by 2025, with the SSLV transfer expected to accelerate its growth.

China has launched its computer operating system, named OpenKylin

China launched country's first open-source desktop operating system (OS) named as OpenKylin 1.0 with the motive to create an independent software system and cut reliance on US technology.

OpenKyline 1.0 is an open-source desktop software developed by group of Chinese companies which is mainly headed by China Electronic Corp.

OpenKylin 1.0 is a Linux operating system created by a community of about 4,000 developers.

OpenKylin users have access to the software's line of code and can easily modify them as they wish, unlike Microsoft and Apple which keeps the working of windows and MacOS secret.

IIT Guwahati has developed an AI-based framework called Osteo HRNet

Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati have developed an AI-based framework called **Osteo HRNet**.

This framework aims to revolutionize the assessment of **Knee Osteoarthritis (OA)** severity through the automatic **analysis of X-ray images**.



While MRI and CT scans offer a 3D view of knee joints for accurate diagnosis, their limited availability and high cost hinder their widespread use. X-ray imaging, on the other hand, emerges as a more economically feasible option for routine diagnosis.

Elon Musk Reveals xAI to Challenge OpenAI

SpaceX founder, Elon Musk, the well-known billionaire entrepreneur recognized for his accomplishments in electric vehicles, space exploration, and social media, has introduced his highly anticipated artificial intelligence **startup, xAI**.

The primary objective of the company is to disrupt the dominance of major technology corporations in the AI industry, with a particular focus on developing an alternative to **OpenAI's ChatGPT**.

Musk has consistently voiced his advocacy for prudence and regulation in the **progression of AI technology**.

He has repeatedly expressed concerns regarding the potential risks of uncontrolled advancement, emphasizing the possibility of **“civilizational destruction.”**

In response to these concerns, xAI will adopt a distinct approach to prioritize the **safety of its AI systems**.

Chandrayaan-3 successfully launched

The **Chandrayaan-3**- India's third mission to the moon took off successfully from the **Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh on July 14**.

The Vikram lander of the mission is expected to soft-land on the surface of the South Pole region of the Moon on around August 23-24.

The LVM3 rocket broke free from the second launch pad at the **Space Centre at about 2.35 p.m**

NASA-ISRO Earth Observing Satellite NISAR coming together in India

Two major components of the **NISAR satellite** have been combined to create a single spacecraft in Bengaluru, India.

Set to launch in early 2024, **NISAR – short for NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar**, is being jointly developed by NASA and the Indian Space Research Organisation, or ISRO, to track movements of Earth's land and ice surfaces in extremely fine detail.

As NISAR monitors nearly every part of our planet at least once every **12 days**, the satellite will also help scientists understand, among other observables, the dynamics of forests, wetlands, and agricultural lands.

‘SAGAR SAMPARK’ Differential Global Navigation Satellite System



The Indian maritime sector is undergoing a significant digital transformation, bolstered by the recent inauguration of the indigenously developed Differential Global Navigation Satellite System (DGNSS).

This state-of-the-art system, named ‘Sagar Sampark,’ is a crucial component of the Digital India campaign, aimed at enhancing efficiency and efficacy in marine operations.

The primary purpose of the DGNSS system is to further strengthen the ongoing digital transformation of the Indian maritime sector.

By addressing the limitations of the GNSS, the DGNSS system offers more accurate positioning information, enabling mariners to navigate with increased precision and confidence.

Simplifai launches the world-first generative AI tool for insurance

Simplifai, an AI automation solutions firm, has launched **Simplifai InsuranceGPT**, a custom-built, **world-first GPT tool** fuelled by the company’s no-code AI-powered platform.

InsuranceGPT provides communication between insurers and their customers through the use of generative AI. As a result, it delivers fast, concise, and accurate responses in a secure way.

While many insurance firms have integrated and utilized **ChatGPT or Google Bard**, InsuranceGPT by Simplifai is the first to be trained specifically on information directly relevant to the insurance industry.

Book News

A book titled “Colours of Devotion” by Anita Bharat Shah

A book titled “**Colours of devotion**” authored by Anita Bharat Shah. ‘Colours of Devotion’ aims at understanding the underlying connection of Indian philosophical concepts of Pushti Marg, as laid down by the saint and founder Shri Vallabhacharya, which inspired the art that was created for use in the religious practices of the Vallabha Sampradaya.

A book titled “India Rising Memoir of a Scientist” authored by R. Chidambaram and Suresh Gangotra

A book titled “**India Rising Memoir of a Scientist**” authored by R. Chidambaram and Suresh Gangotra.

The book looks at the life of one of India’s foremost scientists, Dr R. Chidambaram, who served as **principal scientific advisor (PSA)** to the Government of India and as chairman of



the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet (SAC-C) from November 2001 to March 2018.

As one of India's most distinguished experimental physicists, Dr Chidambaram has made outstanding contributions to many aspects of basic science and nuclear technology.

Sports News

Name	Tournament & Title name	Extra Information
Neeraj Chopra	Lausanne Diamond League 2023	Olympic gold medalist Neeraj Chopra obtained the top spot in Lausanne Diamond League 2023 with a best throw of 87.66 m.
Lakshya Sen	58th Canada Open 2023	Lakshya Sen clinched the men's singles title at the 58th Canada Open 2023. In an exhilarating final match, Sen defeated Li Shi Feng, the reigning All-England champion, in straight games.
England	Under-21 Euro final	England emerged victorious in the Under-21 European Championship final against Spain in Georgia, securing their first title since 1984.
Ajeet Singh	gold medal - Para Athletics Championships	The Charlety Stadium in Paris hosted the Para Athletics World Championships from 8 to 17 July, attracting a diverse participation of more than 1200 athletes from 107 nations.
Iga Swiatek	WTA title	Iga Swiatek achieved a significant achievement by securing her fourth WTA title of the year and her very first on home soil.
Indian women's hockey team	Torneo del Centenario 2023	The Indian women's hockey team wins the title of Torneo del Centenario 2023 by defeating hosts Spain 3-0 in



CURRENT AFFAIRS – JULY 2023

		Terrassa, Barcelona on 30th July.
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Obituary News

Name	Associated Field
Alan Arkin	Oscar-winning actor
Namboothiri	Well known Painter and sculptor
Ravindra Mahajani	Veteran Marathi actor
Dr Mangala Narlikar	Eminent mathematician
Tony Bennett	Legendary American singer

Important Days

Days	Date	Themes
National Postal Worker Day	July 01	
Chartered Accountants Day	July 01	
World UFO Day	July 02	
World Chocolate Day	July 07	
World Population Day	July 11	Unleashing the Power of gender equality: Uplifting the voices of women and girls to unlock our world's infinite possibilities
World Paper Bag Day	July 12	
Nelson Mandela International Day	July 18	
National Mango Day	July 22	
World Brain Day	July 22	Brain Health and Disability: Leave No One Behind
Parents Day	July 23	
World Drowning Prevention Day	July 25	
Kargil Vijay Diwas	July 26	
International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem	July 28	
World Hepatitis Day	July 28	One life, one liver
International Tiger Day	July 29	
International Day of Friendship	July 30	
World Day against Trafficking in Persons	July 30	Reach every victim of trafficking, leave no one behind
World Ranger Day	July 31	30 by 30



