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SEPTEMBER – 2024

NATIONAL NEWS

5th Global Fintech Fest Held in Mumbai

- ★ The 5th Global Fintech Fest was held in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ★ It aims to establish itself as the premier global conference for the global fintech ecosystem, promote collaboration, and influence the future of the Fintech industry.
- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the 5th Global Fintech Fest on 30 August 2024.
- ★ The Global Fintech Fest is organised by the National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI), the Payment Council of India and the Fintech Convergence Council.
- ★ The Fintech Convergence Council was established in 2018 and represents the various regulated financial service providers and fintech companies.
- ★ The theme of the 5th Global Fintech Fest was 'Blueprint for the next decade of finance: Responsible AI | Inclusive | Resilient'.

22nd Navratna CPSE by the Indian Government

- ★ The government of India has upgraded the status of the Central Government Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) NHPC limited from Mini Ratna Category-1 to Navratna status.
- ★ The status of the NHPC was changed by an order issued by the Department of Public Enterprise (Ministry of Finance) on 30 August 2024.
- ★ The upgradation in the NHPC's status will lead to greater financial autonomy for the company's management.

Ministry of Women and Child Development Launches SHe-Box Portal

- ★ The Ministry of Women and Child Development, led by Union Minister Smt. Annapurna Devi has launched the new SHe-Box portal, a centralised platform for registering and monitoring complaints of sexual harassment of women at the workplace.
- ★ The launch event took place in New Delhi, with Minister of State Smt. Savitri Thakur, Secretary Shri Anil Malik, and other ministry officials in attendance.
- ★ The SHe-Box portal serves as a centralized repository of information related to Internal Committees (ICs) and Local Committees (LCs) formed across the country in both government and private sectors.
- ★ It provides a common platform to file complaints, track their status, and ensure time-bound processing by ICs, thereby streamlining the complaint redressal process for all stakeholders.

- ★ The portal includes a designated Nodal Officer for real-time monitoring of complaints, ensuring swift and assured redressal.
- ★ Alongside the SHe-Box portal, the Ministry launched a newly developed website to enhance the government's engagement with both national and global audiences.

Dr Mansukh Mandaviya Launches "RESET" Programme

- ★ Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya launched the "Retired Sportsperson Empowerment Training" (RESET) Programme on National Sports Day in New Delhi.
- ★ The programme aims to empower retired athletes by providing them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and opportunities to enhance their employability and career development.
- ★ RESET Programme will serve as a bridge between generations, enabling retired athletes to share their rich experiences with the new generation of aspiring athletes.
- ★ The initiative is designed to harness the unique skills of retired athletes, contributing to the growth of sports in India and fostering nation-building.
- ★ Retired sportspersons aged 20-50 years who have won international medals, participated in international events, or have been national/state medallists in competitions recognized by National Sports Federations, the Indian Olympic Association, or the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports are eligible to apply.

Government Launches Simplified Pension Application Form 'Bhavishya'

- ★ The government introduced a new, simplified pension application form named 'Bhavishya' to streamline the retirement process for Central Government employees.
- ★ It was launched by Union Minister Jitendra Singh through video conference, the new form, Form 6A, consolidates nine separate forms into a single, unified document.
- ★ The new form will be available on the Bhavishya and e-HRMS portals.
- ★ It will be accessible to all Central Government employees retiring from December 2024 onwards.
- ★ The Bhavishya initiative, led by the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, aims to streamline the pension process and ensure that all retirement dues and the Pension Payment Order (PPO) are processed and delivered on the day of retirement.
- ★ The system allows retiring employees and administrative authorities to track pension sanctions and payment processes online.
- ★ The eHRMS (electronic Human Resource Management System) portal, which maintains service records and other details of government employees, supports the pension application process and is integrated with the Bhavishya form.

Nitin Gadkari, Hardeep Puri Inaugurates India Bio-Energy and Tech Expo

- ★ Union Minister for Road Transports and Highways Nitin Gadkari and Union Minister for Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri jointly inaugurated the India Bio-Energy and Tech Expo 2024 on 2 September 2024 in New Delhi.

- ★ The Expo is being held from 2-4 September 2024.
- ★ The Indian Federation of Green Energy organised the India Bio-Energy and Tech Expo 2024 in association with MMACTIV Sci-Tech Communications Ltd in New Delhi.
- ★ The India Bio-Energy and Tech Expo 2024 provides a platform for the stakeholders to deliberate about the future of bioenergy technologies and take steps to promote India's green energy initiatives.
- ★ The event brings together various stakeholders, such as the government, industry leaders, and experts, to discuss the latest advancements in bioenergy and its role in achieving India's sustainability goal.

Labour Ministry to Launch Revamped Shram Suvidha Portal

- ★ The Labour Ministry is set to launch a revamped, user-friendly version of the Shram Suvidha Portal by the end of the year.
- ★ The new portal aims to enhance the ease of doing business by simplifying processes for businesses.
- ★ The upgraded portal will incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) technologies to streamline various operations.
- ★ This will facilitate easier filing of registrations and submission of returns required under different labour laws.
- ★ The use of AI and ML will help in automating processes, reducing errors, and improving compliance for businesses.

Centre Plans to Increase Insurance Cover Under PMJJBY and PMSBY Schemes

- ★ The Central Government is planning to increase the insurance coverage amount under its flagship schemes — Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY).
- ★ The proposed increase will raise the coverage from the current ₹2 lakh to ₹5 lakh under both schemes.
- ★ The move aims to address the protection gap in insurance coverage and provide adequate financial support to insured individuals or their dependents.
- ★ The enhancement is being considered in the lead-up to the state Assembly elections in Maharashtra, Haryana, and Jammu and Kashmir.
- ★ The increase in coverage aligns with the government's goal of achieving "insurance for all by 2047".
- ★ PMJJBY has over 200 million subscribers, while PMSBY enrolments stand at 453.6 million.
- ★ PMSBY provides one-year renewable personal accident insurance, covering death and disability due to accidents for individuals aged 18 to 70.
- ★ PMJJBY offers life insurance coverage for the death of the insured for individuals aged 18 to 50.

Samunnati to Host 4th FPO Conclave on Sustainable Agriculture in Hyderabad

- ★ Samunnati, a prominent agri-value chain enabler, will host the 4th edition of the Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) Conclave on September 3-4, 2024, in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- ★ The conclave will focus on 'Sustainable Agriculture Solutions', aiming to empower small-holder farmers and agribusinesses across over 20 states in India.
- ★ The event will feature over 500 FPO representatives, industry experts, and policymakers who will discuss and explore innovative, eco-friendly agricultural solutions.
- ★ The goal is to create a platform for FPOs to connect, grow, and thrive by adopting sustainable farming practices and advancing agri-business solutions.
- ★ Leading agri-tech industry players such as Olam Agri, Bayer, Farmers One, Credit Access Life, Bioseed, Indofil Industries, Accel Sine, and Villgro will showcase their innovative solutions and discuss opportunities for collaboration.
- ★ The conclave highlights the Indian government's repeated calls to strengthen FPOs to overcome challenges in traditional and sustainable farming, advocating for increased financial support for these organizations.

Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly Introduces Zero Hour

- ★ For the first time, the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly introduced Zero Hour in its legislative proceedings on 4 September 2024.
- ★ The practice of zero hour in parliamentary democracy is an invention of the Indian Parliament.
- ★ It was introduced during the Sixties in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, and this practice is gradually being adopted by the state legislative assemblies in India.
- ★ The term Zero Hour is nowhere mentioned in the rules of the Parliament and the State Assembly. It is a convention, not a rule.
- ★ The zero hour will commence at 12:30 PM after the end of the Question Hour and will last half an hour.
- ★ The question hour period in the state legislative assembly is from 11:30 A.m. to 12:30 Noon on almost all Himachal Pradesh legislative assembly working days.
- ★ During the Zero hour, the member of the assembly can raise matters of urgent public importance.

Government Plans National Brand for FPO Products Amid Policy Finalization

- ★ The Union government is finalizing a national policy for Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and is considering the creation of a national brand for products emerging from the FPO ecosystem.
- ★ As part of the 10,000 FPO Programme launched in 2020, approximately 9,000 FPOs have already been formed, involving 20 lakh farmers.

- ★ Over the next two years, the program aims to increase the FPO membership base to 50 lakh farmers with plans to boost equity infusion to over ₹800 crore.
- ★ The government is working on developing a uniform grading tool for FPOs, consolidating guidelines from SFAC, Samunnati, Crisil, and NABARD.
- ★ To ease financial access for FPOs, the Agriculture Ministry is in discussions with the Finance Ministry to lower the cost of capital for these organizations.
- ★ Samunnati, celebrating 10 years of operations, has significantly contributed to the FPO movement, with NABARD playing a crucial role.
- ★ SG Anil Kumar, Founder and CEO of Samunnati, anticipates that within two years, there could be 100 FPOs with turnovers exceeding ₹100 crore.

National Test House (NTH) and BEE Collaborate to Promote Energy Efficiency in India

- ★ The National Test House (NTH) under the Department of Consumer Affairs signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) to strengthen India's energy efficiency initiatives.
- ★ The MoU aims to enhance the Standards & Labelling (S&L) Programme, a vital initiative that promotes energy efficiency across the country.
- ★ Under this agreement, NTH will be recognized as a referral laboratory by BEE, handling cases related to technical disputes regarding test results.
- ★ Power Secretary Pankaj Agarwal emphasized the importance of verifying the consistency of star ratings provided by BEE to electrical appliances. The collaboration with NTH will aid in market surveillance and ensure reliable testing.
- ★ NTH will conduct capacity-building training for BEE Officers and will have its Officers nominated to BEE's various technical committees.
- ★ NTH is India's largest multidisciplinary testing laboratory, providing technical consultancy, testing, calibration, and quality evaluation across various sectors.
- ★ BEE, established in 2002 under the Ministry of Power, focuses on reducing the energy intensity of the Indian economy through policies and strategies for energy conservation.

Union Cabinet Approves ₹13,966 Crore Schemes for Agriculture and Semiconductor Sector

- ★ The Union Cabinet approved seven schemes worth nearly ₹13,966 crore aimed at enhancing farmer incomes through technological advancements and modernizing existing agricultural practices.
- ★ It is to build Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for farmers, which includes:
 - Agri Stack: An open-source digital infrastructure for data access, enabling better farm incomes.
 - Krishi Decision Support System: Provides geospatial data, drought and flood monitoring, weather data, groundwater tracking, and crop yield modeling.

- ★ The mission will incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data, and facilitate connections between farmers and buyers, delivering crucial farming knowledge via mobile phones.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Unveils India's First Homegrown RT-PCR Kit

- ★ Andhra Pradesh (AP) Chief Minister (CM), Nara Chandrababu Naidu launched India's first indigenous Monkeypox RT-PCR Kit at the AP Medtech Zone (AMTZ) in Visakhapatnam.
- ★ The kit was developed at AMTZ in collaboration with Transasia Diagnostics.
- ★ It has been validated by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO).
- ★ The kit includes lyophilized components designed for easy shipping and use in remote areas.
- ★ It offers precise, reliable, and accessible diagnosis for Monkeypox.
- ★ This marks a significant step in India's capability to produce and utilize indigenous medical technology for emerging health threats like Monkeypox.

India's First Fashion Forecasting Initiative 'VisionNxt' portal, Launched

- ★ The Union Ministry of Textiles has launched the VisioNxt web portal to establish India as a global fashion leader.
- ★ The web portal will use information technology to provide India-specific real-time trend insights for the Indian fashion industry.
- ★ This service is expected to benefit India's textile and apparel industry greatly.
- ★ It will help establish India as a leader in the global fashion sector and reduce its dependence on foreign fashion forecasting agencies.
- ★ The VisioNxt web portal was launched by the Union Minister of Textiles, Giriraj Singh.
- ★ Giriraj Singh also launched the India-specific Fashion Trend Book 'Paridhi 24 × 25'.
- ★ The VisioNxt web portal has been developed by the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) under the Union Ministry of Textiles.
- ★ The VisioNxt combines Artificial Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence to generate fashion trends using traditional Indian culture as a base.
- ★ It uses a unique prediction model known as "DeepVision" to decode patterns and interpret fashion trends in India.

World's 1st Breeding centre for Asian King Vultures Inaugurated in UP

- ★ Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre in the Bharivaisi, Campierganj Range of the Gorakhpur Forest Division.
- ★ It is the world's first conservation and breeding centre for the Asian King Vulture or the red-headed vulture.
- ★ The Uttar Pradesh Forest Department, in collaboration with the Bombay Natural History Society, has established the Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre in Maharajganj.

- ★ The Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Centre spread over 1.5 hectares of land in the Gorakhpur forest division, was built for ₹2.8 crore.
- ★ The centre has multiple bird cages, a nursery for juveniles, a hospital and recovery facility for birds needing medical help, and a food processing centre.
- ★ The centre also includes an incubation centre to rear the vulture eggs artificially to ensure 100% results are other features.

PM Modi Virtually Launches Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari Initiative

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually launched the Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari initiative on 6 September 2024.
- ★ The Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari initiative was launched in Surat, Gujarat.
- ★ The Jan Sinchay and Jan Bhagidari Initiative is a joint scheme of the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Gujarat government.
- ★ The initiative aims to enhance the state's water conservation efforts by constructing rainwater harvesting structures across the state and recharging the underground aquifers.
- ★ The initiative aims to construct around 24,800 rainwater harvesting structures across the state.
- ★ These rainwater harvesting structures are being built with community participation.
- ★ The initiative seeks to build upon the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti's "Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain" scheme.

Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde Praises National e-Governance Award Winners

- ★ Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde commended the winners of the National e-Governance Awards, referring to them as revolutionaries making lives easier for citizens across the country.
- ★ He announced at the inauguration of the 27th National Conference on e-Governance in Mumbai.
- ★ The theme for the two-day event is "Viksit Bharat: Secure and Sustainable e-Service Delivery".
- ★ CM Shinde credited e-governance with enabling the quick transfer of funds through initiatives like the Mukhyamantri Mazhi Ladki Bahin Yojana.
- ★ E-governance is not just about technology; it's a shift in mentality that promotes transparency in governance and fosters trust between citizens and the government.

Information and Broadcasting Ministry organised Khel Utsav 2024

- ★ In honor of National Sports Day 2024, coinciding with the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting hosted the inaugural "Khel Utsav 2024" from August 27 to August 30, 2024.
- ★ The event was held at two prominent venues in New Delhi: Major Dhyan Chand Stadium and Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium.
- ★ The Ministry plans to include additional sports in future editions of Khel Utsav, expanding the scope and reach of the event.

- ★ Khel Utsav 2024 served as a vibrant celebration of sports and a tribute to Major Dhyan Chand's legacy, fostering enthusiasm and engagement in sports within the Ministry.

United Nations World Food Programme and Odisha Government

- ★ The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the Government of Odisha launched India's first around-the-clock grain dispensing machine, the 'Grain ATM', also known as 'Annapurti' (Hindi for fulfiller of food), in the state capital Bhubaneswar.
- ★ The machine was inaugurated by Krushna Chandra Patra, Odisha Minister of Food Supplies, Consumer Welfare, Science and Technology, with Nozomi Hashimoto, Deputy Country Director for WFP in India, present.
- ★ Odisha is the first state in India to provide round-the-clock access to the PDS, enhancing convenience and efficiency.
- ★ The 'Grain ATM' operates 24 hours a day, allowing beneficiaries to access public distribution system (PDS) grains at any time.
- ★ It can dispense up to 50 kilograms of grain within five minutes, reducing waiting times by 70%.
- ★ The initiative is part of efforts to strengthen nutritional security under the National Food Security Act (NFSA).
- ★ Under NFSA, the Centre provides free food grains to 813.5 million beneficiaries, focusing on the most vulnerable 67% of India's population.
- ★ The scheme aims to ensure food security and improve access to essential grains for the needy.

SEMICON India 2024

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the SEMICON India 2024 at the India Expo Mart in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, on 11 September 2024.
- ★ The three-day SEMICON India exhibition and conference, which will run from 11 to 13 September, will project India as a rising investment destination in the world semiconductor market and provide a platform for the global semiconductor industry to interact with government policymakers and the Indian industry.
- ★ SEMI, in collaboration with München India and with the support of the Union Ministry of Information Technology (MeitY), has organised the SEMICON India 2024 exhibition and conference.
- ★ SEMI is a global association of the semiconductor industry and professionals representing the global electronics manufacturing and design supply chain.
- ★ The theme of SEMICON India 2024 is Shaping the Semiconductor Future.
- ★ The main aim of SEMICON India 2024 is to provide a platform for global leaders, semiconductor industry experts, academia, and government officials to interact and explore opportunities to invest in the Indian semiconductor sector.
- ★ According to Prime Minister Modi, India's electronics sector is valued at over \$150 billion, and the government aims to achieve a valuation of \$500 billion by the end of 2030.

Government to Launch Farmers' Registration for Unique ID

- ★ The Indian government is set to begin the registration of farmers across the country to provide them with a unique ID similar to Aadhaar.
- ★ Agriculture Secretary Devesh Chaturvedi announced the initiative at the Outlook Agri-Tech Summit and Swaraj Awards.
- ★ Guidelines for the registration process will be issued soon.
- ★ The registration is set to begin in the first week of October.
- ★ The target is to register five crore farmers by March 2025.
- ★ The registration initiative is a part of the government's ₹2,817-crore Digital Agriculture Mission.
- ★ The mission, recently approved by the Cabinet, aims to digitize the agriculture sector.
- ★ The unique ID will streamline farmers' access to various agricultural schemes, such as the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and Kisan Credit Card programme.
- ★ It will eliminate the need for repeated verification, reducing costs and harassment for farmers.

PM Modi to Inaugurate Global RE-INVEST 2024

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the fourth edition of the Global RE-INVEST Renewable Energy Investors Meet and Expo.
- ★ The event will be held at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, from September 16 to 18, 2024.
- ★ It is organized by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, the event aims to promote international co-operation and innovation in the renewable energy sector.
- ★ It serves as a platform for global investors and stakeholders to explore opportunities in the field of renewable energy.

PM Modi Inaugurates 2nd International Conference on Green Hydrogen

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the 2nd International Conference on Green Hydrogen on 11 September 2024.
- ★ Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, Pralhad Venkatesh Joshi, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri, Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India Prof. Ajay K. Sood and other distinguished dignitaries were present on the occasion.
- ★ The three-day 2nd International Conference on Green Hydrogen is being held at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi from 11-13 September 2024.
- ★ The Conference aims to establish India as a leader in the global green hydrogen ecosystem.
- ★ The three-day conference will discuss the recent advances in technologies across the entire Green Hydrogen value chain.
- ★ The forum will provide a platform to the stakeholder of the Green Hydrogen value chain to discuss strategic investments and partnerships needed to accelerate the adoption of green hydrogen technologies in the country.

Union Cabinet Approves Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana – IV

- ★ Union Cabinet approved the fourth phase of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY).
- ★ The government of India launched the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana on 25 December 2000 to connect eligible rural habitation with all-weather roads as part of its poverty reduction strategy.
- ★ The PMGSY-IV will be a centrally sponsored scheme to be implemented by the Union Rural Development Ministry. The duration of the PMGSY-IV is five years, from 2024-25 to 2028-29.
- ★ The total outlay for the PMGSY-IV for its entire duration is ₹70,125 crore.
- ★ The Central Government's share is ₹49,087.50 crore, and the State government's share is ₹21,037.50 crore.
- ★ Under the PMGSY-IV, 62,500 Km of all-weather roads/bridges will be built and upgraded to connect the 25,000 unconnected rural villages

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Launches CM Kisan Yojana

- ★ Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi launched the CM Kisan Yojana by releasing the first instalment of ₹925 crore to benefit nearly 46 lakh farmers.
- ★ The program was launched at Gangadhar Meher University, Sambalpur, coinciding with Western Odisha's major agricultural festival, Nuakhai.
- ★ The BJP government implemented the CM Kisan Yojana, replacing the previous BJD government's Krushak Assistance for Livelihood and Income Augmentation (KALIA) scheme.
- ★ Each small and marginal farmer received ₹2,000 as the first instalment through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), with another instalment to be released on Akshaya Tiritiya day.
- ★ A total of 45,57,733 farmers, including landless farmers, will receive annual financial assistance of ₹4,000 in two instalments, while landless farmers will get ₹12,500 in three instalments.
- ★ The farmers can use the assistance money to buy agricultural equipment, seeds, fertilisers and pesticides well in advance.
- ★ Also, on the occasion, the CM unveiled the Krushak Odisha Unified Portal to provide information on various activities of the State Government to provide support to the farmers.
- ★ Before the launch, the CM participated in the sacred 'Nabanna' ceremony at the Samaleswari Temple in Sambalpur.

AB PM-JAY Benefits Extended to Senior Citizens of 70 Years and Above

- ★ In a significant step towards enhancing healthcare access for the elderly, the Union Cabinet has approved the expansion of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) to cover all senior citizens aged 70 years or above.
- ★ This move is set to benefit approximately 45 million families, encompassing around 60 million senior citizens, providing them with free health insurance coverage of ₹5 lakh on a family basis.
- ★ All senior citizens aged 70 years and above, regardless of their socio-economic status, will now be eligible for the benefits of AB-PMJAY.
- ★ This initiative will be implemented with a budgetary outlay of ₹3,437 crore.

- ★ The scheme provides cashless and paperless health insurance cover of ₹5 lakh per annum per family on a floater basis in empanelled hospitals across India.
- ★ As of now, over 352 million citizens have been covered under AB-PMJAY, receiving free hospitalization insurance.
- ★ Eligible senior citizens will receive a new, distinct card under AB-PMJAY to ensure seamless access to healthcare services.
- ★ Senior citizens aged 70 years and above, already part of families covered under AB-PMJAY, will receive an additional top-up cover of up to ₹5 lakh per year, specifically for themselves.

Cabinet Approves ₹14,335-Crore Scheme to Boost Electric Mobility in India

- ★ The Indian government has taken a significant step to promote green mobility with the approval of a new ₹14,335-crore incentive scheme for the electric vehicle (EV) sector.
- ★ The scheme aims to enhance electric mobility by subsidising electric two-wheelers, three-wheelers, ambulances, trucks, buses, and charging infrastructure.
- ★ The new PM E-DRIVE scheme replaces the previous FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles) scheme.
- ★ ₹10,900 crore has been allocated for the PM E-DRIVE scheme, which will be in effect for two years.
- ★ The scheme includes ₹3,679 crore in subsidies for electric two-wheelers, three-wheelers, e-ambulances, e-trucks, and other emerging electric vehicles (EVs).
- ★ The scheme will support approximately 24.8 lakh electric two-wheelers and 3.16 lakh electric three-wheelers.
- ★ The Cabinet also approved the 'PM-eBus Sewa-Payment Security Mechanism' scheme to support the procurement and operation of e-buses by public transport authorities.

Union Cabinet Approves "Mission Mausam"

- ★ The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved "Mission Mausam" with a significant budget of ₹2,000 crore over the next two years.
- ★ This ambitious initiative aims to strengthen India's capabilities in predicting and responding to extreme weather events and the impacts of climate change.
- ★ It is to enhance India's ability to predict and manage extreme weather events, including monsoon variability, cyclones, and other climate impacts.
- ★ It will also improve weather and climate information across different temporal and spatial scales.
- ★ India Meteorological Department (IMD), Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM) and National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) are the lead institutions.

Madhya Pradesh Government Approves Transfer of State Co-operative Dairy Operations

- ★ The Madhya Pradesh government has approved the transfer of operations of the State Co-operative Dairy Federation and affiliated milk unions to the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) for the next five years.
- ★ The decision was made during a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav in Bhopal.
- ★ The MOU between NDDB and the State Government is expected to help milk farmers in around 11,000 villages in MP by providing better prices for their produce, thereby boosting their economic prosperity.
- ★ NDDB has previously taken over operations of other state co-operatives, such as Mahananda Co-operative Dairy in Maharashtra and Sreeja Co-operative Dairy in Uttar Pradesh.
- ★ The state produces approximately 5.5 crore litres of milk daily and has a per capita milk availability better than the national average.

Union Home Ministry Renames Port Blair as Sri Vijaya Puram

- ★ Government of India has renamed the capital city of the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar to Sri Vijaya Puram from Port Blair.
- ★ This was announced by the Union Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Co-operation, Amit Shah.
- ★ Sri Vijaya Puram is located on South Andaman Island, part of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- ★ The new name Sri Vijaya Puram has been inspired by the Sri Vijaya Empire, which flourished between the 7th and 13th centuries AD in Southeast Asia (present-day Indonesia).
- ★ It was a powerful Buddhist maritime empire with links to India.

ONDC Launches New App to Raise Awareness and Ease Shopping Experience

- ★ The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) has launched an app named 'ONDC Network: How to Shop' to raise awareness among consumers on utilising the network for shopping.
- ★ Available on Playstore and iOS, this app is a gateway for consumers to discover and access various shopping applications, also known as 'buyer apps'.
- ★ The move aligns with ONDC's goal to achieve 30-40 million monthly transactions by the end of FY25.
- ★ The app is designed to help consumers navigate the ONDC ecosystem by discovering various buyer applications within the network and choosing convenient apps to make their purchases.
- ★ The network has been actively explaining this to stakeholders, and the new app will help reinforce this message.
- ★ The app categorizes products and services available on the ONDC network, such as food and beverages, grocery, fashion, home and kitchen products, travel tickets, loans, investments, and insurance, among others.
- ★ Once consumers select a category, the app lists the relevant shopping applications and provides direct links to those apps.

4th Edition of The Global Bio-India 2024

- ★ The 4th Global Bio-India 2024 event successfully concluded on 14 September 2024. The three-day event was held in New Delhi from 12 to 14 September 2024.
- ★ It showcased India's enormous potential in the biotech sector for research, development, and manufacturing to the world.
- ★ The first Global Bio-India was held in 2021, and since then, it has been held annually.
- ★ The 4th Global Bio-India 2024 was organised by the Department of Biotechnology under the Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India, and the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).
- ★ South Korea was the partner country at the 4th Global Bio-India 2024.
- ★ The theme of the 4th Global Bio-India 2024 was 'Biotech Innovation' and 'Bio-manufacturing'.
- ★ The theme aims to promote India as a global hub for research, development, and manufacturing in the biotech sector.

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal Launches Two Portals

- ★ Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal introduced two new online portals during the third Board of Trade meeting.
- ★ These portals aim to ensure timely and transparent service delivery and reduce the need for physical visits to Commerce Ministry offices.
- ★ **Jan Sunwai Portal:** An online platform designed to provide information and services, including grievance redressal.
- ★ This portal features an on-demand videoconferencing facility for addressing trade and industry issues. Scheduled interactions will also be available, allowing stakeholders to connect with Ministry offices without physical visits.
- ★ **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Portal by Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC):** Alongside the SMILE-ERP system, the ECGC portal offers services related to claims, policies, and grievance redressal, ensuring smoother interactions with exporters. It also includes a videoconferencing facility.
- ★ These two portals are part of the government's 100-day agenda, emphasizing digitalization and zero interface between stakeholders and the Commerce Ministry.

4th Global Renewable Energy Investors Meet and Expo

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 4th Global Renewable Energy Investors Meet & Expo (RE-INVEST 2024), being held at the Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, on 16 September 2024.
- ★ Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankar will address the valedictory session of the 4th RE-INVEST 2024 on 18 September 2024.
- ★ The RE-INVEST 2024 seeks to consolidate and further India's position as a global leader in the non-renewable energy sector.

- ★ According to the REN21 Renewables 2024 Global Status Report, India is ranked fourth in the world in Renewable Energy Installed Capacity, fourth in Wind Power capacity, and fifth in Solar Power capacity.
- ★ The main objective of the 4th Global Renewable Energy Investors Meet and Expo will focus on achieving the goal of 500 GW of installed renewable energy in the country by 2030.
- ★ The event will bring together over 10,000 delegates, including influential figures from government, industry, and financial sectors.

President Murmu Inaugurates the 8th India Water Week 2024

- ★ President Draupadi Murmu inaugurated the 8th India Water Week on 17 September 2024.
- ★ The biannual four-day event is being held at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi from 17 to 20 September 2024.
- ★ The International Wash Conference 2024 is also being held simultaneously with the India Water Week.
- ★ The Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, and Government of India organise India Water Week every two years.
- ★ The 8th India Water Week theme is “Partnerships and Co-operation for Inclusive Water Development and Management”.
- ★ The event will bring together global-level decision-makers, politicians, researchers, experts, planners, innovators, students and stakeholders in the field of water resources to discuss issues related to water resources and discuss related to the theme Partnerships and Co-operation for Inclusive Water Development and Management.

Nirmala Sitharaman Launches NPS Vatsalya for Minors

- ★ Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Finance Minister, launched the NPS Vatsalya scheme for minors in New Delhi on 17 September 2024.
- ★ The event was attended by school children and was held simultaneously in 75 locations across the country.
- ★ She also distributed the Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN) cards to new minor subscribers.
- ★ Nirmala Sitharaman announced the NPS Vatsalya scheme in her 2024-25 union budget speech.
- ★ The NPS Vatsalya will be regulated by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).
- ★ National Pension System (NPS) Vatsalya is for minors under 18 years of age and who are residents of India.
- ★ The NPS Vatsalya account is not for non-resident Indians (NRI).
- ★ An NPS -Tier II account will be opened in the name of the minor.
- ★ A Tier-II account is a voluntary savings pension scheme linked to the subscriber’s Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN).

- ★ Each National Pension System subscriber is provided with a unique 12-digit alphanumeric PRAN number that remains with the subscriber until the end.
- ★ The minimum contribution under the NPS Vatsalya scheme is ₹1000 per year, with no maximum limit.

Spices Board Launch 'Cardsapp' To Boost Cardamom Production

- ★ The Spices Board India has introduced a new mobile application called 'CardsApp', aimed at enhancing cardamom production.
- ★ The launch took place during the Spices Conclave and Buyer-Seller Meet held at the Indian Cardamom Research Institute in Myladumpara, Idukki.
- ★ The event was inaugurated by G. Jagadeesha, Secretary of the Spices Board.
- ★ The Spices Board aims to empower farmers by leveraging technological advancements like 'CardsApp' to boost productivity and promote sustainable growth in India's cardamom production industry.
- ★ The app provides vital soil test results, including a Soil Fertility Map, based on samples from 19 villages in Udumbanchola and Idukki.
- ★ It is designed to offer data-driven insights to farmers to improve cardamom productivity.

Gujarat Government Establishes GRIT as Policy Think Tank Led by CM Bhupendra Patel

- ★ The Gujarat government has set up the Gujarat State Institution for Transformation-GRIT under Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel's Chairmanship.
- ★ The body will act as a policy think tank on the lines of NITI Ayog.
- ★ The Chief Minister will be the Chairman of the Governing Body of this Grit, while the Finance Minister will be the Vice-Chairman and the Ministers of Agriculture, Health, Education and Industries as members.
- ★ A 10-member executive committee will be in place for the day-to-day operations of GRIT.
- ★ The formal resolution regarding the formation of 'GRIT' and its scope will be published by the General Administration Department-Planning Division.

2nd NADA India Inclusion Conclave Inaugurated in New Delhi

- ★ The 2nd edition of the NADA (National Anti-Doping Agency) India Inclusion Conclave was held in New Delhi on 18 September 2024.
- ★ The 2nd edition of the Inclusion Conclave was held on the sidelines of the 2nd Formal Meeting of the COP9 Bureau and the 3rd Formal Meeting of the Fund Approval Committee under the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport, held on September 17-18, 2024.
- ★ The India Inclusion Conclave has been organised by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), India's nodal anti-doping agency in sports. NADA is under the administrative control of the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

- ★ NADA organises the India Inclusion Conclave to educate and create awareness amongst para-athletes (athletes with disabilities) about anti-doping.
- ★ Doping in sports refers to the use of banned performance-enhancing drugs by athletes to gain an unfair advantage over competitors.
- ★ According to a recent World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) report India reported the highest case of doping in the world in 2022.

Statistics Ministry to Leverage AI for the Eighth Economic Census

- ★ The Statistics Ministry plans to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the Eighth Economic Census (EC), scheduled from January to December 2025.
- ★ AI will be used to pre-fill data in survey forms, reducing errors and the time required to complete the process.
- ★ AI is expected to become a key tool in future government surveys, helping streamline data collection and analysis.
- ★ The Economic Census collects detailed data on the operational and structural characteristics of establishments across India.
- ★ It provides crucial insights into the geographical distribution, ownership structures, and workforce composition of economic activities.
- ★ The data is essential for socio-economic development planning at the state and district levels.

Central Government Approves Bio-RIDE Scheme of the DBT

- ★ The Central Government has approved the launch of the 'Biotechnology Research Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development (Bio-RIDE)' scheme of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Union Ministry of Science and Technology.
- ★ The two existing schemes of the DBT have been merged, and a new component, Biomanufacturing and Biofoundry, has been added to the Bio-RIDE scheme.
- ★ The newly approved Bio-RIDE will continue from 2021-22 to 2025-26 during the 15th Finance Commission period.
- ★ The proposed outlay for the scheme is ₹9197 crore for 2021-2025-26.
- ★ The newly approved Bio-RIDE merges the two previous DBT schemes and includes one new component.
- ★ The components of the scheme are Biotechnology Research and Development, Industrial and Entrepreneurship Development and Biomanufacturing and Biofoundry
- ★ Biomanufacturing and Biofoundry are the newly introduced components of the Bio-RIDE scheme.
- ★ Biomanufacturing refers to using biological systems (living organisms, animal/plant cells, tissues, enzymes, etc.) to manufacture commercially important biomolecules for use in food, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, energy, etc. It is an interdisciplinary field that involves microbiology, biochemistry, and chemical engineering.
- ★ In a Bio-Foundry, all biomanufacturing processes are highly automated, which helps accelerate the design-build-test-learning workflow to deliver products quickly and efficiently.

Union Cabinet Approves National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) for AVGC-XR in Mumbai

- ★ The Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of the National Centre of Excellence (NCoE) for Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics, and Extended Reality (AVGC-XR) in Mumbai.
- ★ This project aims to promote India's AVGC sector and position the country as a global content hub.
- ★ The centre will be formed as a Section 8 Company under the Companies Act, 2013.
- ★ The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) will partner with the Government of India for this initiative.
- ★ The NCoE aims to boost the media and entertainment industry in India, attracting foreign investment and enhancing India's soft power globally.
- ★ The initiative follows the creation of an AVGC Task Force, announced in the 2022-23 budget, and will support the rapidly growing sectors of consumer behaviour, the creator economy, and disruptive technologies.

Zanskar Hosts 9th Edition of Ladakh Zanskar Festival 2024

- ★ The 9th Ladakh Zanskar Festival 2024 began with remarkable grandeur in the picturesque village of Sani, signifying a landmark event for the region.
- ★ The festival was inaugurated by Lieutenant Governor Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra.
- ★ This year's Zanskar Festival is especially significant as it marks the first celebration since Zanskar was officially declared a district.
- ★ The two-day festival showcases a wide array of cultural performances, reflecting the diverse traditions of the region.
- ★ Highlights include performances by the Purgi tribes from Kargil, the Shina community of Drass, the Dard-Aryans from Aryan Valley, and the Changpa nomads from Changthang.

National PM Vishwakarma Scheme

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the National PM Vishwakarma Program held in Wardha, Maharashtra, on 20 September 2024 to celebrate the first anniversary of the PM Vishwakarma Scheme.
- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Central Sector Scheme "PM Vishwakarma" on 17 September 2023 in New Delhi.
- ★ The Prime Minister also distributed Vishwakarma certificates and loans to the scheme's beneficiaries.
- ★ Prime Minister Modi also launched the Maharashtra Government's Acharya Chanakya Skill Development Scheme and the Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Women Startup Scheme on this occasion.
- ★ Prime Minister Modi laid the foundation stone of PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) Park at Amravati, Maharashtra.

- ★ The PM Vishwakarma scheme is a five-year central sector scheme that aims to support 18 traditional crafts done traditionally by families using hands and tools.
- ★ The Central Government has allocated ₹13,000 crore for the scheme from 2023-24 to 2027-28.

India to Host Second Edition of Global Food Regulators Summit

- ★ India is set to host the second edition of the Global Food Regulators Summit from September 19-21, 2024, in New Delhi.
- ★ Organized by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) under the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the event aims to bring together international experts and regulators to discuss critical food safety regulations.
- ★ The event will promote global collaboration and knowledge-sharing on key issues such as food safety, risk assessment, and capacity building.
- ★ The summit will focus on fostering International Co-operation on food safety regulations.
- ★ A new portal will be launched to enhance transparency and communication regarding food imports.

Uttar Pradesh's First Semiconductor Park to be Established in Greater Noida

- ★ The first semiconductor park in Uttar Pradesh will be established in Greater Noida, near the upcoming Noida International Airport.
- ★ The Uttar Pradesh government has allocated 225 acres of land in Sector 10 and Sector 28 for semiconductor manufacturing projects by three companies.
- ★ Arun Vir Singh, Chief Executive Officer, Yamuna Development Authority (YEIDA), stated that 50 acres of land in Sector-10 have been allocated to Kaynes Semicon Private Limited and Vama Sundari Investments for setting up semiconductor units.
- ★ Vama Sundari Investments plans to develop a semiconductor unit expected to create 13,780 jobs, produce 2.40 lakh chips per month, and require 19 MW of electricity and 2,000 million liters of water per day.
- ★ Kaynes Semicon will also establish a unit on 50 acres, with specific electricity requirements.
- ★ The three companies are expected to invest between ₹40,000 crore and ₹80,000 crore in their respective projects.

Bhupendra Yadav Launches Clean the Beach Campaign 2024

- ★ The Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav, led the country in this year's Clean the Beach Campaign on the occasion of the International Coastal Clean-up Day on 21 September 2024.
- ★ The Clean the Beach Campaign was simultaneously undertaken on more than 100 beaches across the country.
- ★ The campaign is part of the government of India's "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" and "Swachh Sagar Abhiyan", which call for a mass cleanliness and sanitation campaign in the country with public participation.

- ★ The campaign focuses on encouraging citizens to clean up coastal areas of man-made trash like plastic bottles, cigarette butts, glass, etc., and create awareness about preserving and protecting the oceans and waterways.

Finance Ministry Plans ‘One State, One RRB’ Policy to Boost Efficiency

- ★ The “One State, One RRB” policy, aimed at consolidating Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) for operational efficiency, is in the drafting phase.
- ★ As per the Department of Financial Services (DFS), draft rules for the policy will be completed by the end of September 2024.
- ★ Venkateshwar Reddy, Secretary General of the AIRRBEA, stated that the policy may eventually lead to the creation of the National Rural Bank of India, reducing the number of sponsor banks.
- ★ RRBs face significant employee attrition despite offering pay scales similar to Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs).
- ★ The Finance Ministry recommended implementing more employee-friendly policies, including local postings, to improve retention.
- ★ According to NABARD, the number of RRB employees declined from 95,833 in FY22 to 91,664 in FY23.

Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY and U-Win Portal

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to officially launch the expanded Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) scheme and the vaccination tracking portal U-Win, as announced by Health Minister J.P. Nadda.
- ★ The scheme will benefit approximately 60 million eligible citizens aged 70 and above across 45 million families.
- ★ It has been expanded to cover all senior citizens aged 70 and above, with no income cap.
- ★ It provides a cashless and paperless benefit of ₹5 lakh per annum per family for hospitalization in empanelled hospitals across India.
- ★ Over 354 million citizens have been covered under the scheme, receiving PMJAY cards for health insurance.
- ★ The U-Win vaccination management portal is currently operational on a pilot basis, with 64.6 million beneficiaries registered.
- ★ The expanded AB-PMJAY will be implemented in October 2024.
- ★ A new treatment regimen for tuberculosis will be introduced under the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP), reducing treatment duration from 9-12 months to 6 months.
- ★ A detailed rollout plan for logistics and training of health professionals is being prepared, aimed at treating approximately 75,000 drug-resistant TB (DRTB).

ANIMATE 2024: Fostering Creativity Through 2D Animation Hackathon

- ★ ANIMATE 2024, a 2D animation hackathon organised by FOSSEE, IIT Bombay, in partnership with Whistling Woods International, concluded with an award ceremony at the Whistling Woods campus.
- ★ It was organized by FOSSEE, IIT Bombay in collaboration with Whistling Woods International.
- ★ Theme of the event “Celebrating India’s Innovation”.
- ★ Over 5,000 students from across India, including rural areas, took part in the 2D animation hackathon.
- ★ Students were given access to free learning resources, including tutorials on Synfig Studio, through the Spoken Tutorial platform at IIT Bombay.
- ★ Materials were provided in vernacular languages, making the event accessible to students from diverse backgrounds.
- ★ Veteran filmmaker Subhash Ghai, actors Vikrant Massey and Medha Shankr, along with key dignitaries, presented the awards.
- ★ The event encouraged participation from tier-three and tier-four cities, aiming to equip India’s rural youth with animation and videography skills.

Odisha is to Join the Centre’s Ayushman Bharat Health Insurance Scheme

- ★ Odisha is set to join the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri – Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY), which offers health coverage of ₹5 lakh per family annually for secondary and tertiary hospitalization.
- ★ A senior Health Ministry official confirmed that some technical issues are being resolved with the state before full implementation.
- ★ Odisha’s existing health scheme will continue alongside the Central scheme, with shared financial responsibilities between the Centre and the state.
- ★ Currently, 18 states have integrated their health schemes with AB PM-JAY. States like Punjab are being engaged for compliance, while Bihar has recently joined.
- ★ The scheme shows a public-private utilization split, with 57% under public healthcare. Key specialties utilized include cancer, nephrology, cardiology, and general medicine.
- ★ The scheme covers all pre-existing diseases from day one and includes 1,949 medical procedures across 27 specialties, such as general medicine, surgery, oncology, and cardiology.

Delhi Government Plans to Extend EV Policy Till March 2025

- ★ Delhi’s Electric Vehicle (EV) policy is set to be extended until March 2025 as directed by Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot.
- ★ The proposal will be submitted for Cabinet approval, ensuring the continuation of subsidies and perks like road tax exemption for EV buyers.
- ★ A new version, EV Policy 2.0, is currently being drafted and is expected to be finalized within 2-3 months.

- ★ The existing policy, initially set to expire in August 2023, has already been extended and will remain active to avoid disruption for EV buyers.
- ★ Launched in August 2020, the EV policy aims to curb vehicular pollution and increase the share of electric vehicles (EVs) to 25% by 2024.
- ★ The policy has seen 9% of total vehicle registrations in Delhi being EVs since 2020, with over 2 lakh e-vehicles sold between 2020 and 2024.

MoPSW Announced Establishment of Ship-Building and Repair Clusters

- ★ The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) announced the establishment of ship-building and repair clusters in five states: Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Kerala, and Odisha.
- ★ These clusters aim to enhance the strategic importance of India's shipbuilding and ship repair industry.
- ★ Over the next five years, container handling capacity across Indian ports is expected to reach 40 million TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units).
- ★ This expansion is projected to create 2 million job opportunities.
- ★ Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) will increase its capacity from 6 million TEUs to 10 million TEUs, becoming the first Indian port to reach this milestone.
- ★ The ministry has allotted 3,900 acres of land in Deendayal Port Authority (DPA) and O. Chidambaranar Port Trust (VoCPA) for the development of hydrogen manufacturing hubs.
- ★ This initiative is expected to attract investments worth over ₹5 lakh crore.

Ministry of Textiles introduces Quality Control Order for Medical Textiles

- ★ The Ministry of Textiles has announced the Medical Textiles (Quality Control) Order, 2023, which will come into effect on October 1, 2024.
- ★ This landmark initiative aims to establish stringent quality standards for critical medical textile products.
- ★ The Quality Control Order (QCO) applies to essential medical textile products including Sanitary Napkins, Baby Diapers, Reusable Sanitary Pads and Dental Bibs.
- ★ Mandatory Certifications: To ensure that these products consistently meet essential quality benchmarks.
- ★ Legal Requirement: Compliance with the standards will be legally required, with penalties for non-compliance.
- ★ Exemptions: Small-scale enterprises and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are exempt from the QCO requirements to address potential challenges.

Uttar Pradesh International Trade Show-2024

- ★ Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) has the largest base of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India, with 96 lakh MSME units spread across 75 districts.

- ★ MSMEs are the second-largest job creators in the U.P. after agriculture, playing a major role in the state's industrial transformation.
- ★ U.P.'s One District One Product (ODOP) scheme promotes unique products from each of the 75 districts, boosting local industries.
- ★ 4 international airports are functional, with Noida International Airport (Jewar) expected to be completed by the end of the year.
- ★ The Ganga Expressway, the longest in the country, is expected to be completed before the Prayagraj Mahakumbh in 2025.
- ★ Government-to-Government (G2G) and Government-to-Business (G2B) initiatives are being showcased to emphasize U.P.'s growth and industrial capabilities.

Airtel Launches India's First AI-Powered Spam Detection Solution

- ★ In a groundbreaking initiative to tackle the growing issue of spam calls and messages in India, Bharti Airtel has launched the country's first network-based, AI-powered spam detection solution.
- ★ This pioneering tool aims to reduce spam communication for its customers significantly.
- ★ The solution notifies customers in real-time about suspected spam calls and SMS, enhancing protection against unwanted communications.
- ★ The spam detection service is free of charge and will be automatically activated for all Airtel customers, eliminating the need for service requests or app downloads.
- ★ By cross-referencing communication behaviors against known spam patterns, the system effectively flags suspected spam calls and messages.
- ★ The system can also identify unusual activities, such as frequent changes in IMEI numbers, which are common indicators of fraudulent behavior.

Om Birla Inaugurated the 21st CPA Zone-III India Region Conference

- ★ Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla inaugurated the 21st Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Zone-III Conference at Aizawl, Mizoram.
- ★ The conference aims to foster collaboration and dialogue among the Northeastern state legislatures, focusing on addressing regional challenges through democratic means.
- ★ The CPA Zone-III Conference was attended by the Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, who is also the Chairman of the Commonwealth India Region, Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha Harivansh, Chief Minister of Mizoram Lalduhoma.
- ★ The CPA Zone-III Conference theme was "Democratic Sanctity, Transparency, Accountability, and Results from Democracy."
- ★ The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association was established in 1911 to promote parliamentary democracy and good governance in Commonwealth countries.

2nd India Sugar and Bio-Energy Conference

- ★ Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and New and Renewable Energy, inaugurated the 2nd India Sugar and Bio-Energy Conference on 26 September 2024 in New Delhi.
- ★ The conference brings together policymakers, industry leaders, researchers, and stakeholders to encourage dialogue, innovation, and collaboration for sustainable growth and development of the sugar and bio-energy industries.
- ★ The Indian Sugar and Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA), in collaboration with the Indian Government and the International Sugar Organisation, organised the 2nd India Sugar and Bio-Energy Conference.
- ★ The 2nd India Sugar and Bio-Energy Conference theme was 'Harmonising Sweet Sustainability: Navigating India's Path to a Green Economy'.
- ★ The government of India has launched the Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme to blend 20 per cent ethanol with petrol. The government aims to achieve this target by 2025-26 nationwide.

Tripura Government Introduces CM-SATH Scheme

- ★ The Chief Minister of Tripura, Manik Saha, launched the CM-SATH scheme to support meritorious students in higher education, fulfilling a pre-poll promise.
- ★ The scheme offers financial aid of ₹60,000 (₹5,000 monthly) for a duration of two to three years to 200 selected students based on merit.
- ★ The financial assistance is aimed at 100 students at the Madhyamik level and 100 students at the Higher Secondary level.
- ★ The Chief Minister emphasized the government's commitment to ensure that financial constraints do not impede access to quality education and the growth of talent.
- ★ The government aims to enhance educational opportunities for marginalized groups, including the poor, tribals, women, and minorities.
- ★ The scheme is part of a broader initiative to improve educational policies, ensure quality education, and enhance the learning process in Tripura.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Colombo Security Conclave Members Sign MoU to Establish a Secretariat

- ★ The Member countries of the Colombo Security Conclave have agreed to institutionalise and give permanent status to the regional security platform of the Indian Ocean countries.
- ★ The Colombo Security Conclave was set up in 2011 as an India-Sri Lanka-Maldives maritime security dialogue and renamed the Colombo Security Conclave in 2020.
- ★ The Colombo Security Conclave meeting is conducted at the national security advisor level of the member countries.

- ★ The permanent members of the Colombo Security Conclave are India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Mauritius.
- ★ Bangladesh was admitted as a member during the 8th Deputy National Security Adviser (DNSA) level meeting of the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), which was hosted by Mauritius virtually on 10 July 2024.
- ★ Seychelles has an observer status in the Colombo Security Conclave.
- ★ The member countries also agreed to strengthen capacity through training courses, joint exercises, workshops, and skill development programs.
- ★ They also agreed to promote close co-operation in the fields of oceanography, hydrography, maritime security, marine pollution, maritime law, marine archaeology, and protection of marine resources.

India Sign MoU with UAE

- ★ The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Accountability Authority to foster collaboration between the two institutions in public sector audits.
- ★ The agreement was signed by Girish Chandra Murmu, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, and Humaid Obaid Khalifa Obaid Abushibs, the President of the UAE Accountability Authority in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- ★ The CAG is the apex audit institution in India, and the UAE Accountability Authority is the supreme auditing authority in the UAE.
- ★ The MoU aims to promote collaboration between the two institutions in public sector auditing.
- ★ It seeks to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practices in public sector audits.
- ★ It seeks to facilitate the capacity development of each country's auditors by providing training facilities in other countries.
- ★ The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) is a constitutional body established under Article 148 of the Constitution.

Joint Russian-Indian Commission Meeting

- ★ The Second Meeting of the Joint Russian- Indian Commission on the Co-operation in the Field of Emergency Management was held in Moscow, Russia.
- ★ Shri Nityanand Rai, Minister of State for Home Affairs, India is leading the Indian delegation.
- ★ The working plan of the Joint Russian-Indian Commission on Co-operation in the Field of Emergency Management for 2025-2026 was signed by Mr. Rai and Minister of the Russian Federation for Civil Defence, Emergencies, and Elimination of Consequences of Natural Disasters, Kurenkov Aleksandr Vyacheslavovich.
- ★ Both countries agreed to implement this plan and continue exchanging best practices and lessons learned in disaster management.

- ★ The meeting aimed to strategize and execute previous agreements, including:
- ★ The Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) for Emergency Management Co-operation in December 2010.
- ★ The first meeting of the commission was held in New Delhi in 2016.

Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation

- ★ New Delhi will host the 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation on 11 and 12 September 2024. The first Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation was held in Beijing, China, in 2018.
- ★ The economically dynamic Asia-Pacific region is a major contributor to global air traffic, with India being one of the world's fastest-growing passenger aviation markets.
- ★ The Union Ministry of Civil Aviation, in partnership with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Asia Pacific Office (APAC), has organised the 2nd Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation.
- ★ APAC is the regional office of the ICAO in the Asia Pacific region.
- ★ The second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation will discuss issues related to the safety and growth of the civil aviation sector in the region.

Mexico Becomes the 1st Country to Approve Popular Election of Judges

- ★ Mexico became the first country to allow voters to elect judges at all levels.
- ★ The reform was driven by outgoing President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who criticised the judiciary for favouring political and economic elites.
- ★ The reform was passed with 86 votes in favour and 41 against, surpassing the two-thirds majority required to amend the constitution.
- ★ The reform affects judges at all levels, including local, high-level, and Supreme Court judges.
- ★ Around 1,600 judges are expected to stand for election in 2025 or 2027.
- ★ Court employees and law students protested against the reform, arguing concerns about the potential impact on the judiciary.
- ★ The reform was approved in an upper chamber dominated by the ruling Morena party and its allies.

International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) General Assembly and Global Co-operative Conference 2024

- ★ The International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) General Assembly and the Global Co-operative Conference 2024 are scheduled to take place from November 25th to November 30th, 2024, at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- ★ It will be for the first time in the 130 years long history of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), the premier body for the Global Co-operative movement, the ICA General Assembly and Global Co-operative Conference are going to be hosted by India.

- ★ The theme for this year's conference is "Co-operatives Build Prosperity for All", which is in line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of 'Sahkar se Samridhi'.
- ★ The conference will mark the official launch of the UN International Year of Co-operatives – 2025.
- ★ A commemorative stamp celebrating the International Year of Co-operatives – 2025 will be unveiled during the event.
- ★ The conference will feature a 'Haat' setup with a theme of Indian Villages to showcase products and services from Indian co-operatives.

Operation Sadbhavana Launched to Help Typhoon Yagi Affected Countries

- ★ The government of India has launched Operation Sadbhavana to help countries affected by Typhoon Yagi in Southeast Asia.
- ★ The Indian government has announced USD one million in humanitarian assistance to Vietnam and USD one lakh to the Lao People's Democratic Republic as part of its Act East Policy and its policy of being the first responder in providing Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) to impacted countries.
- ★ The name of the tropical cyclone 'Typhoon Yagi' was given by the Japanese Meteorological Agency.
- ★ The government of India, under Operation Sadbhavana, has announced one million dollars in humanitarian assistance to Vietnam.
- ★ The 35 tons of humanitarian assistance includes a consignment of water purification items, water containers, blankets, kitchen utensils, and solar lanterns, among other things.
- ★ Typhoon Yagi, with a speed of more than 142 miles per hour, affected Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar, Lao People's Democratic Republic and southern China.

World Health Organisation Approves First Mpox Vaccine

- ★ The World Health Organization (WHO) granted its first authorisation for a mpox vaccine for use in adults, marking a critical step in combating the disease, particularly in Africa.
- ★ The vaccine is produced by Bavarian Nordic A/S, and its pre-qualification allows global health agencies like GAVI and UNICEF to purchase it.
- ★ However, supply is limited due to the single manufacturer.
- ★ The pre-qualification of this vaccine is crucial for addressing current outbreaks in Africa and preparing for future scenarios.
- ★ It represents a critical advancement in the global response to mpox.
- ★ The approved vaccine is administered in a two-dose regimen to individuals aged 18 and above.
- ★ It is also authorized for use in infants, children, and adolescents in outbreak settings where the benefits outweigh the risks, though it is not currently licensed for those under 18 years old.

New Delhi Hosts the 3rd World Food India 2024

- ★ The 3rd edition of World Food India 2024 is being held in New Delhi from 19-22 September 2024. The event is organised by the government of India to promote domestic and foreign investment

in the country's food processing sector and to highlight the country's rich food culture to the world.

- ★ Along with the 3rd World Food India 2024 the 2nd edition of the Global Food Regulators Summit hosted is also being held.
- ★ The Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) is organising the Global Food Regulators Summit on 20-21 September 2024 in New Delhi.
- ★ New Delhi hosted the first World Food India in 2017 and the 2nd edition in 2023.
- ★ The World Food India is organised by the Union Ministry of Food Processing Industries.
- ★ Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Gujarat are the partner states in the 3rd edition of World Food.
- ★ Japan is the partner country for World Food India 2024, and Vietnam and Iran are the focus countries.
- ★ Participants from 90 countries, 18 Union Ministries, 26 States and Union Territories, and other statutory bodies related to the country's food sector are participating in World Food India 2024.
- ★ The theme of the 3rd World Food India 2024 is Processing for prosperity.

Nepal Joins International Solar Alliance as Its 101st Full Member

- ★ Nepal became the 101st country to join the International Solar Alliance (ISA) as a full member.
- ★ Nepal handed over its Instrument of Ratification to the ISA in New Delhi.
- ★ ISA supports its member countries in enhancing solar deployment to improve energy access, ensure energy security, and transition toward low-carbon growth.
- ★ The ISA is a collaborative initiative between India and France, conceptualized during the COP21 in Paris, 2015, to combat climate change by implementing solar energy solutions.
- ★ After a 2020 amendment to its Framework Agreement, all UN member states are eligible to join the ISA.

The Hague Becomes World's First City to Prohibit Ads

- ★ The Hague became the first city in the world to ban advertisements promoting fossil fuel products and carbon-intensive services including cruise ships and air travel.
- ★ The Dutch city's local council passed legislation early Friday that takes effect on 1, 2025.
- ★ The decision follows a call from United Nations Chief Antonio Guterres for governments to abolish such ads, similar to actions against tobacco that began in the 1960s.
- ★ The Hague is a city on the North Sea coast of the western Netherlands.

Algeria Granted Membership in BRICS New Development Bank

- ★ Algeria has been granted authorization to join the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB), a multilateral development bank.

- ★ The NDB was established in 2015 by the BRICS countries-Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa to support infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other developing countries.
- ★ In 2021, the NDB expanded its membership to include Bangladesh, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Uruguay.
- ★ Algeria, as Africa's leading natural gas exporter, is expected to benefit from NDB membership through new opportunities to bolster and sustain its economic growth in the medium to long term.

Donald Trump Unveils Cryptocurrency Venture 'World Liberty Financial'

- ★ Former President Donald Trump launched a new cryptocurrency venture called World Liberty Financial just 50 days before Election Day.
- ★ World Liberty Financial is designed to be a crypto banking service that allows users to borrow, lend, and invest in digital currencies.
- ★ World Liberty Financial is Donald Trump's new cryptocurrency venture, aiming to offer decentralized finance (DeFi) services.
- ★ Decentralized finance (DeFi) eliminates the need for intermediaries like banks, using blockchain technology to keep tamper-proof records of transactions.
- ★ World Liberty Financial allows users to lend or borrow cryptocurrencies directly, bypassing traditional financial systems.
- ★ DeFi platforms use blockchain technology to conduct peer-to-peer transactions without intermediaries.
- ★ These platforms may involve fees for converting digital assets into fiat currencies, like the US dollar, through online exchanges.

Jordan Becomes First Country to Eliminate Leprosy, Receives WHO Verification

- ★ The World Health Organization (WHO) has congratulated Jordan for becoming the first country in the world to be officially verified as having eliminated leprosy.
- ★ This achievement represents a major milestone in global public health efforts.
- ★ Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is a chronic infectious disease caused by Mycobacterium leprae. It affects the skin, nerves, and mucosal surfaces and can lead to permanent damage if untreated.
- ★ Early diagnosis and treatment are essential in preventing disability from the disease.
- ★ Jordan's success is attributed to strong political commitment and effective public health strategies.
- ★ WHO sent an independent verification team to assess Jordan's status, and after a thorough review, they confirmed the elimination of leprosy in the country.
- ★ This achievement sets a new benchmark for other countries in the fight against neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) like leprosy, which still affect many parts of the world.

Cotton Association of India and the International Cotton Association

- ★ The Cotton Association of India (CAI) and the Liverpool-based International Cotton Association Ltd (ICA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance co-operation and promote fair business practices in the cotton industry.
- ★ The agreement aims to combine efforts for promoting contract sanctity and fair business practices in cotton trading.
- ★ The ICA is recognized as the world's leading arbitral body in cotton, with most global cotton trading conducted under its bylaws.

PM Modi and G-4 Calls for Urgent Reform in UN Security Council

- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the foreign ministers of the Group of 4 Countries or G-4 have called for urgent reform in the United Nations Security Council structure.
- ★ Prime Minister Narendra Modi, speaking at the 'Summit of the Future' at the 79th United Nations General Assembly in New York, called for reform in the United Nations to reflect the current geopolitical reality and be relevant.
- ★ The Summit of the Future at the United Nations was held on 22-23 September 2024, with the theme of 'Multilateral Solutions for a Better Tomorrow'. It was addressed by a number of world leaders.
- ★ G4 is a group of India, Brazil, Japan, and Germany formed in 2005 to seek reform in the United Nations Security Council.
- ★ All these countries want a permanent seat in the Security Council, which currently has five permanent veto-wielding countries: Russia, China, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

India-US to Jointly Set Up Multi-Chip Fab Unit for National Security

- ★ India and the United States will jointly set up the world's first multi-material chip fabrication unit in India, which will be exclusively for national security purposes.
- ★ Both the countries agreed to jointly set up a new semiconductor plant which will produce chips to be used in high-technology warfare platforms, like advanced communications, advanced sensing, and high voltage power electronics equipment.
- ★ With the establishment of the chip fabrication plant, India will become one of the few countries in the world to make such chips.
- ★ The agreement between India and the United States on-chip fabrication is the result of the U.S.-India initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET).
- ★ The new fabrication unit, which will be called Shakti, will be set up in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh and it will be situated next to the under-construction Jewar International Airport.
- ★ The plant will be supported by the US Space Force, the Semiconductor Mission of the Indian government and the Indian chip manufacturing companies Bharat Semiconductors and 3ediTech.

N. Sitharaman Attends 9th AIIB Board of Governors Meeting in Samarkand

- ★ Union Minister for Finance and Minister for Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman represented India at the 9th Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) Board of Governors meeting in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.
- ★ The 9th AIIB Board of Governors meeting was held in Samarkand on 25-26 September 2024.
- ★ The theme of the 9th AIIB Board of Governors meeting was: Building Resilient Infrastructure for All.
- ★ The theme highlights the AIIB's emphasis on developing financial tools that will help member countries withstand climate-induced shocks and increase their resilience to such shocks.
- ★ In June 2024, the AIIB introduced Climate Policy-Based Financing (CPBF) to mobilise private capital so that member countries can meet their financial needs for achieving their national climate action plans.

S. Jaishankar Signs BBNJ Agreement to Protect Marine Biodiversity

- ★ India has officially joined the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, which seeks to protect marine biodiversity on the high seas.
- ★ Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, on behalf of the Government of India, signed the BBNJ agreement on 25 September 2024 at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the United States of America.
- ★ The Union Cabinet approved the BBNJ agreement in a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 2 July 2024.
- ★ The nodal ministry to implement the provisions of the BBNJ agreement will be the Union Ministry of Earth Science.
- ★ The Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) agreement, also popularly known as the 'High Seas Treaty', is an international agreement sponsored by the United Nations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea (UNCLOS).
- ★ The agreement provides a set of mechanisms to protect marine biodiversity in the high seas and to sustainably use marine resources (oil and gas, fish, minerals, etc) through International Co-operation.
- ★ It prohibits any nation from claiming exclusive rights to marine resources on the High seas.
- ★ The agreement aims to minimise impacts on the marine environment through area-based management tools and by establishing rules for environmental impact assessments.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

International Solar Alliance to Unveil \$100 Million Solar Facility

- ★ The International Solar Alliance (ISA) will launch a \$100 million fund, Global Solar Facility, that will help catalysing up to \$1.5 billion in funding to expand decentralised solar power

capacities across the least developed countries in Africa, where more than 700 million people have no access to electricity.

- ★ ISA is developing an insurance mechanism to accelerate investment in solar projects in impoverished nations.
- ★ The insurance initiative aims to create financial security for investors and enhance financial flows into the solar sector.
- ★ The announcement of both initiatives is expected at ISA's first international solar festival in New Delhi.
- ★ The festival is designed to catalyze global solar adoption through partnerships, innovative financing, technology deployment, and capacity building.
- ★ The \$100 million guarantee fund is projected to leverage approximately 15 times its value, potentially resulting in \$1.5 billion in solar projects.
- ★ Currently, \$39 million has been committed to the fund, with an additional \$15 million expected soon. The fund will be operational once it reaches \$50 million.

Japan's Space Agency Halts Moon Lander Mission After Losing Contact with Uncrewed Spacecraft

- ★ Japan's space agency ended its Moon lander operation after losing communication with the uncrewed spacecraft.
- ★ The Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM), dubbed the "Moon Sniper" for its landing precision, touched down eight months ago-making Japan only the 5th nation to achieve a soft lunar landing.
- ★ The touchdown of the unmanned lander in January was a success, but it landed at a wonky angle that left its solar panels facing the wrong way.
- ★ The SLIM's mission aims to examine a part of the Moon's mantle, the usually deep inner layer beneath its crust believed to be accessible at the crater where it landed.
- ★ The spacecraft carried two probes: one with a transmitter and a mini-rover that could move like a turtle around the lunar surface, sending images back to Earth.

India Successfully Launches Agni-4 Ballistic Missile

- ★ India successfully launched the Agni-4 ballistic missile from the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur, Odisha.
- ★ The test was conducted under the Strategic Forces Command (SFC)
- ★ The Agni missiles are long-range, nuclear-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missiles developed by India.
- ★ The Agni-4 is a long-range, surface-to-surface ballistic missile with a range of 4,000 kilometres.
- ★ It is capable of carrying nuclear warheads.
- ★ The launch validated all operational and technical parameters.

- ★ The Agni-Prime, a new-generation ballistic missile, was successfully tested on April 4, 2024 from APJ Abdul Kalam Island, off the coast of Odisha.
- ★ The Agni-Prime test met all trial objectives, with data captured by range sensors and two downrange ships.
- ★ The first pre-induction night launch of Agni-Prime was conducted in June 2023.

Indian Immunologicals Limited Launches Paediatric Dose of Hepatitis A Vaccine

- ★ Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL) launched its paediatric dose of India's first indigenous Hepatitis A vaccine, Havisure.
- ★ IIL is the only company in India to develop an indigenous Hepatitis A vaccine.
- ★ Hepatitis A is a highly contagious liver infection caused by the Hepatitis A virus, which predominantly affects children and can lead to severe health complications.
- ★ Vaccination is the most cost-effective, yet efficient, method to prevent the disease.
- ★ Havisure is available in 0.5 ml and 1 ml dosage forms, specifically for paediatric and adult use, respectively.

Bharat Biotech and Alopexx Inc. to Co-Develop and Commercialize Anti-Microbial Vaccine AV0328

- ★ Hyderabad-based vaccine maker Bharat Biotech and clinical-stage U.S. biotechnology firm Alopexx Inc. will collaborate to co-develop and commercialise anti-microbial vaccine AV0328 in India and other low-income and lower-middle-income countries.
- ★ AV0328 is a proprietary broad-spectrum anti-microbial vaccine candidate from Alopexx.
- ★ It is designed to target poly N-acetyl glucosamine (PNAG), which is present on the surface of a variety of bacterial, fungal, and parasitic pathogens.
- ★ Alopexx will receive one-time upfront and milestone payments as well as royalties on future sales in the licensed territories.
- ★ Pre-clinical studies targeting PNAG showed effectiveness in preventing and treating infections caused by over 15 different pathogens.
- ★ A phase I, first-in-human trial of AV0328 has been completed.
- ★ The trial showed that the vaccine is well-tolerated with no serious adverse events and induced antibodies capable of killing a broad range of PNAG-expressing pathogens.
- ★ The vaccine has shown promise as a broad-spectrum antimicrobial solution due to its effectiveness against a wide range of pathogens.

Indian Scientists Create 'Brain on a Chip' Technology

- ★ Indian scientists at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have developed a groundbreaking "brain on a chip" technology.
- ★ This technology can store and process data in 16,500 states within a molecular film.
- ★ The research paper detailing this technology was published in the journal Nature.

- ★ The technology represents a significant leap from traditional binary computing to neuromorphic computing, which is brain-inspired and analog.
- ★ This neuromorphic platform could enable complex AI tasks, such as training Large Language Models (LLMs), to be performed on personal devices like laptops and smartphones.

Indian Immunologicals Limited and Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture

- ★ Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL) and the Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA) have partnered to develop a commercial vaccine targeting Viral Nervous Necrosis (VNN) in finfish.
- ★ VNN is a disease that causes high mortality rates in young fish and can be transmitted from adults to offspring.
- ★ There are currently no commercially available fish vaccines in India.
- ★ Infections in fish are managed with anti-infectives and other conventional measures, which have varying degrees of success.
- ★ Aquaculture in India faces economic losses due to infections caused by bacterial, viral, fungal, and other agents.

European-Japanese Spacecraft Captures Closest Images of Mercury's Surface at Sunrise

- ★ BepiColombo is a joint mission between the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) aimed at studying Mercury.
- ★ BepiColombo made its closest approach to Mercury, capturing detailed black-and-white images of the planet's surface.
- ★ The spacecraft provided the first clear images of Mercury's south pole and detailed views of its craters, including those with unusual peak rings.
- ★ The mission aims to study Mercury's surface, composition, magnetic field, and its interaction with the solar environment.
- ★ It was named after Giuseppe "Bepi" Colombo, an Italian mathematician and engineer known for his contributions to the understanding of Mercury's orbit.
- ★ The spacecraft was launched on October 20, 2018.
- ★ BepiColombo is recognized for its ambitious and complex objectives, requiring advanced technology and precision for successful operation.

Union Cabinet Approves Chandrayaan-4 Mission to Collect Lunar Sample

- ★ The Union Cabinet approved the Chandrayaan-4 mission in a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 18 September 2024.
- ★ The Chandrayaan-4 mission will collect lunar samples from the moon's surface and bring them back to Earth. Only three countries — the United States of America, Russia, and China — have successfully brought lunar soil back to Earth.

- ★ According to the Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw, the ultimate goal is to land an Indian astronaut on the lunar surface by 2040 and successfully return them to Earth.
- ★ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), which launched Chandrayaan-1 in 2008, Chandrayaan-2 in 2019, and Chandrayaan-3 in 2023, will be responsible for the Chandrayaan-4 mission.
- ★ ISRO has been allocated a budget of ₹2104.06 crore for the Chandrayaan-4 mission to be completed in 36 months.
- ★ All the necessary technologies will be developed indigenously with the help of the Indian industry.
- ★ The government of India approved an ambitious space programme during the Amrit Kaal. It envisages a mission to Venus, a functioning Indian Space Station named Bharatiya Antariksh Station by 2035, and an Indian landing on the surface of the Moon by 2040.

Government Approves ISRO's Interplanetary Mission to Venus, VOM

- ★ The Central Government has approved the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)'s interplanetary Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM) to study the Venus planet.
- ★ The Venus Orbiter Mission, also known as the Sukrayaan mission, was approved in a meeting of the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 18 September 2024.
- ★ This is ISRO's second interplanetary mission after the Mars Orbiter Mission or Mangalyaan, which was launched on November 5, 2013.
- ★ India will become the fifth country to send a spacecraft to Venus after the Soviet Union, the United States, the European Union, and Japan.
- ★ The total approved budget for the Venus Orbiter Mission or the Sukrayaan mission is ₹1236 crore, of which ₹824.00 crore will be spent on developing the spacecraft.
- ★ The mission is expected to be launched in March 2028, when the Earth and Venus will be aligned so that the spacecraft will use minimum fuel to enter Venus's orbit.
- ★ The primary science objectives of the Venus Orbiter Mission or the Sukrayaan mission are to map Venus' surface and subsurface while studying the planet's atmospheric chemistry and interaction with the solar wind.

Metro Bank Partners with Infosys

- ★ Metro Bank, the UK's community-focused bank, has announced a long-term collaboration with Infosys, a global leader in digital services and consulting, to significantly improve its IT and support functions.
- ★ This partnership aligns with Metro Bank's ongoing efforts to boost efficiency and cut costs while undergoing a digital transformation to optimize business operations.
- ★ Infosys will play a crucial role in enhancing Metro Bank's digital capabilities, focusing on improving automation, refining data management, and embedding AI technologies to streamline processes and enhance customer experience.

- ★ The collaboration will also leverage Infosys Topaz, an AI-first platform built on generative AI technologies, to further simplify and enhance the consistency of services for Metro Banks customers, known as FANS.
- ★ The partnership aims to deliver a more seamless and consistent customer experience, utilizing advanced technologies like artificial intelligence and data analytics.
- ★ Infosys expertise in automation and AI will enable Metro Bank to provide faster, more personalized services, improving overall customer satisfaction.

Iran Successfully Launches Chamran-1 Research Satellite

- ★ Iran launched the Chamran-1 research satellite into orbit using the Qaem-100 rocket, developed by the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard.
- ★ The event marks a key advancement in Iran's aerospace program, despite scrutiny from Western nations due to concerns about ballistic missile development.
- ★ Chamran-1 weighs 60 kilograms and was placed into a 550-kilometer orbit.
- ★ The Qaem-100 rocket is a solid-fuel, three-stage vehicle and had been previously used for a satellite launch in January.
- ★ The primary mission of Chamran-1 is to test hardware and software systems for orbital maneuver technology validation.

MoU Signed Between ARIES and BEL For Space Situational Awareness

- ★ The Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a Navaratna Defence PSU, to collaborate on space technologies with a specific focus on Space Situational Awareness (SSA).
- ★ The collaboration aims to develop advanced technologies for tracking space objects, including near-Earth objects and artificial satellites, to enhance satellite safety and user protection.
- ★ SSA is critical for predicting and avoiding potential collisions between objects in space. It supports the safety and reliability of satellite operations, which is increasingly vital as the number of satellites in orbit grows.
- ★ This MoU aligns with the Indian government's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' and 'Make-in-India' initiatives, aiming to bolster India's technological capabilities in space.
- ★ The collaboration will leverage observations from ARIES's state-of-the-art telescopes, including the 4m International Liquid Mirror Telescope (ILMT), to enhance data collection and analysis for SSA.

Airtel Collaborates with Italy's Sparkle

- ★ Strengthening its global connectivity infrastructure, Bharti Airtel has partnered with Italy's international service provider Sparkle to access capacity on Blue-Raman Submarine Cable Systems connecting India and Italy.
- ★ The two companies will also work together on the development of new business opportunities and projects in the Indian sub-continent, leveraging their respective cable infrastructures.

- ★ Sparkle is a major player in the telecommunication cable industry, which owns and manages a network of more than 600,000 km of fibre spanning from Europe to Africa and the Middle East, the Americas and Asia.
- ★ Back in 2022, Airtel had announced partnerships with Meta and STC to extend 2Africa Pearls subsea cables to India connecting Airtel's landing station in Mumbai.
- ★ The 2Africa is among the longest subsea cable systems in the world, spanning over 45,000 km.
- ★ It will have a capacity of 180 terabits per second (tbps), connecting 33 countries, including Sunil Mittal-led Airtel's landing station in Mumbai.

Bengaluru Startup Bellatrix Aerospace Launches Project 200

- ★ Bengaluru-based space startup Bellatrix Aerospace unveiled Project 200, an innovative satellite designed to operate at an Ultra-Low Earth Orbit (180 km-250 km) on the inaugural day of the Bengaluru Space Expo 2024.
- ★ "Project 200 is a technology demonstration mission to qualify a new unconventional satellite powered by an innovative propulsion system at around 200 km.
- ★ Traditionally, satellites have been deployed in orbits at altitudes well above 450 km.
- ★ This altitude choice has been influenced by various considerations, such as the desire to minimise the impact of atmospheric interference on satellite operations.
- ★ Though it is known that a satellite's capabilities improve significantly at 200 km, limitations on propulsion technology have prevented satellites from operating at this orbit.
- ★ According to Bellatrix, at 200 km, a satellite's capability would improve significantly since the communication latency is reduced by half and image resolution is improved by three times.
- ★ The cost of the satellite is also less when compared to spacecraft placed in 450 km orbits.

India Set to Launch Its First Venus Mission in 2028

- ★ The Union Cabinet approved India's first mission to Venus, set to be launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in March 2028.
- ★ The total budget for the Venus Orbiter Mission is ₹1,236 crore, with ₹824 crore dedicated to spacecraft development.
- ★ This will be India's second interplanetary mission, following the successful Mars Orbiter Mission launched in 2013.
- ★ The Venus mission is meant to study the planet from an orbit around it.
- ★ The mission will carry scientific instruments from India and abroad to examine the surface and sub-surface of Venus, its atmosphere, its ionosphere, and its interaction with the Sun.
- ★ The spacecraft will carry approximately 100 kilograms of scientific instruments, including contributions from international collaborators.
- ★ After launch, the spacecraft will use a slingshot maneuver to reach Venus in about 140 days, entering a highly elliptical orbit of 500 km by 60,000 km around the planet.
- ★ The mission will employ aerobraking, a first for India, allowing the spacecraft to skim through Venus's atmosphere to create drag and reduce its orbit.

- ★ The payload features a synthetic aperture radar for imaging Venus's surface, a thermal camera for studying temperature variations, and instruments to analyze atmospheric composition, structure, and variability.

BANKING, FINANCE & ECONOMICS

SEBI Proposes UPI-Like Blocking Mechanism for Securities Market

- ★ The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed that Qualified Stock Brokers (QSBs) offer a UPI-based block mechanism for trading in the secondary market, similar to the Application Supported by Blocked Amount (ASBA) facility used in the primary market.
- ★ This mechanism allows clients to trade based on funds blocked in their bank accounts rather than transferring funds upfront to the trading member.
- ★ The UPI block facility is optional for investors and not mandatory for Trading Members (TMs) to offer.
- ★ The Application Supported by Blocked Amount (ASBA)-like facility ensures that funds are moved only when an allotment occurs.
- ★ SEBI suggested that QSBs must provide this facility for individuals and Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs) in the cash segment.
- ★ SEBI has suggested that QSBs could alternatively offer a “3-in-1 trading account facility”.
- ★ The UPI block mechanism would be initially available only for the cash segment with restrictions on the number of daily blocks.

Finance Minister Announces New Pension Scheme ‘NPS Vatsalya’

- ★ Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman made the announcement of a new pension scheme under the National Pension Scheme (NPS), called NPS Vatsalya.
- ★ The scheme is designed to help parents and guardians plan for their children's future financial needs, specifically for their retirement savings.
- ★ Parents or guardians can open an NPS Vatsalya account for their minor children and make contributions.
- ★ The funds contributed will accumulate in the account until the child turns
- ★ Upon reaching adulthood (18 years), the accumulated amount will be transferred to a standard NPS account, and the scheme can be converted into a non-NPS plan.
- ★ Contributions to the NPS under this scheme are eligible for tax deductions under Section 80C and an additional deduction of up to ₹50,000 under Section 80CCD (1B) of the Income Tax Act.

- ★ The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) is the governing body overseeing the NPS Vatsalya scheme.

RBI Imposes Penalty on UCO Bank and Cent Bank Home Finance Limited

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of ₹2.68 crore on UCO Bank.
- ★ The penalty is due to Non-compliance with RBI directions related to Interest Rate on Advances, Opening of Current Accounts by Banks (Need for Discipline), Interest Rate on Deposits and Classification and Reporting of Frauds by Commercial Banks and Select Financial Institutions (FIs).
- ★ RBI has also imposed a penalty of ₹2.1 lakh on Cent Bank Home Finance Limited.
- ★ Reason for Penalty is Non-compliance with certain Know Your Customer (KYC) directions provisions.
- ★ This penalty has been imposed in the exercise of powers vested in RBI conferred under section 52A of the National Housing Bank Act, 1987.

HDFC Bank Unveils DigiPassBook to Streamline Investments in a Single Platform

- ★ HDFC Bank has launched DigiPassBook, a new feature on its SmartWealth app which allows users to consolidate all their investments under one roof.
- ★ It allows users to manage and view all their equity investments, ETFs and demat accounts in the app.
- ★ DigiPassBook is supported by the account aggregator framework, which allows users to consolidate financial assets from different institutions.
- ★ In the future, HDFC Bank plans to expand the DigiPassBook to include investments in insurance and bonds, marking a significant enhancement for the SmartWealth app.
- ★ Currently, the facility allows users to aggregate their equity investments, ETF holdings and transactions from various depository participants by providing a one-time consent.
- ★ With this feature, users can seamlessly access investment details, transactions and analytics, all in one place.
- ★ It also consolidates bank account balances, reducing the need to switch between multiple apps and provides a comprehensive view of income and expenses.

Aditya Birla and Policybazaar Introduce Lifetime Family Income Protection Plan

- ★ Aditya Birla Sun Life Insurance (ABSLI) and Policybazaar have jointly launched a new term insurance plan called 'Income Suraksha Plan'.
- ★ The plan provides a guaranteed monthly income for life in the "unfortunate event" of the policyholder's death.
- ★ Key Features include:

- Increasing Income Protection Option: Offers a 5% annual increment in the monthly income, capped at 1.5 times the initial amount.
- Premium Discount: Up to a 9% one-time discount on the first-year premium.
- Eligibility Criteria:
 - Age at Entry: 21 to 55 years.
 - Maturity Age: 31 to 70 years.
- Plan Options: Fixed Income Protection: Provides a fixed monthly income to the nominee for the chosen policy term.

State Bank of India Secures ₹7,500 Crore through Tier 2 Bond Issuance

- ★ State Bank of India (SBI) raised ₹7,500 crore through its first Basel III compliant Tier 2 bond issuance for the current financial year.
- ★ The bonds were issued at a coupon rate of 7.42%.
- ★ The bonds have tenure of 15 years, with a call option after 10 years and on each anniversary date thereafter.
- ★ SBI received 70 bids amounting to over ₹8,800 crore, against a base issue size of ₹5,000 crore, indicating oversubscription and strong investor interest.
- ★ The total number of bids received was 70 indicating wider participation with heterogeneity of bids.
- ★ The investors were across provident funds, pension funds, mutual funds and banks.

IndiaFirst Life Becomes the First Indian Life Insurer to Launch Operations in GIFT City

- ★ IndiaFirst Life Insurance Company Limited (IndiaFirstLife) has become the first Indian life insurer to commence operations in Gujarat International Finance Tec City (GIFT City), Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- ★ The company inaugurated its IFSC Insurance Office (IIO) at the country's international financial gateway.
- ★ IndiaFirst Life's IIO will have a dedicated team involving specialists who will cater to the needs of GIFT City's global audience.
- ★ The company offers a specially designed ULIP product for global Indians – IndiaFirst Life Wealth Wise plan.
- ★ This US dollar denominated plan is ideal for international customers looking for long-term wealth and legacy creation.

AU Small Finance Bank Seeks RBI Green Light for Transition to Universal Bank

- ★ AU Small Finance Bank has formally applied to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for approval to transition from a small finance bank to a universal bank.

- ★ The RBI's invitation for applications from small finance banks (SFBs) to become universal banks was issued on April 26, 2024.
 - Net Worth: Minimum net worth of ₹1,000 crore at the end of the previous quarter.
- ★ Shares of the bank should be listed on a recognized stock exchange.
 - Asset Quality: Gross non-performing assets (GNPA) and net non-performing assets (NNPA) should be $\leq 3\%$ and $\leq 1\%$, respectively, in the last two financial years.
 - Performance Track Record: Minimum five-year satisfactory track record.
- ★ The RBI issued licensing guidelines for small finance banks in November 2014.
- ★ Besides AU Small Finance Bank, other SFBs like Equitas Small Finance Bank and Ujjivan Small Finance Bank are also subject to these guidelines.

NPCI Unveils New ATM Products and Renames BBPS to Bharat Connect

- ★ The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) unveiled products aimed at transforming ATM infrastructure in the country.
- ★ These new offerings include Bharat BillPay (BBPS) for Business, designed to streamline business-to-business (B2B) transactions across different ERPs and accounting platforms, and UPI Circle, which enables delegate payments to users.
- ★ NPCI's launches at the Global Fintech Fest included UPI Interoperable Cash Deposit and banks showcasing digital banking units.
- ★ The introduction of UPI interoperable cash deposit service will allow customers to use UPI to deposit cash at automated teller machines run by banks and white-label ATM operators, either into their own bank accounts or any other bank account without the need for a physical card.
- ★ Such ATMs are cash recycler machines, used for both cash deposits and withdrawals.
- ★ Additionally, RBI announced the rebranding of the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) to Bharat Connect.
- ★ This is an important step to refresh and strengthen the BBPS brand.
- ★ Bharat Connect embodies NPCI Bharat BillPay Limited's (NBBL) values and vision for stakeholders and customers.

World Bank Raises Indian Growth Forecast to 7% in FY 25

- ★ The World Bank has raised the growth forecast for the Indian economy in the current financial year (2024-25) to 7 per cent from its earlier projection of 6.6 per cent.
- ★ The upward revision in the World Bank forecast occurred after the Indian economy recorded its lowest quarterly growth in fifteen months.
- ★ The Indian economy grew by 6.7 per cent during the Q1 (April-June) of the 2024-25 fiscal year.
- ★ The World Bank report "India Development Update: India's Trade Opportunities in a Changing Global Context" was released on 3 September 2024.
- ★ The World Bank expects India to remain the fastest-growing major economy in the world in the current financial year.

- ★ The Indian economy grew by 8.2 per cent in 2023-24 and was the fastest-growing major economy in the world.
- ★ It expects the Indian economy to grow by 6.7 per cent in 2025-26 and 2026-27.

Public Sector Banks Reduce Government Securities Holdings Under Held-to-Maturity by 50%

- ★ Public sector banks have cut their holdings of government securities (G-Secs) under the Held-to-Maturity (HTM) category by over 50%.
- ★ This reduction follows revised investment norms issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ★ The new guidelines came into effect from April 1, 2024.
- ★ Investments must now be classified into HTM, Available-for-Sale (AFS), and Fair Value through Profit and Loss.
- ★ Banks can now sell only up to 5% of their HTM holdings, reducing flexibility.
- ★ Banks are limited to a 5% profit realization from HTM holdings, as they cannot sell more than this percentage.
- ★ Banks are required to provide more detailed disclosures about their investment portfolios.
- ★ The 90-day ceiling on holding periods for HFT has been removed, allowing banks more flexibility in this sub-category.

BharatPe Collaborates with Unity Bank

- ★ BharatPe has partnered with Unity Bank to launch its UPI Third Party Application Provider (TPAP) service.
- ★ The “postpe” app has been rebranded as “BharatPe”, now available for UPI payments.
- ★ Customers can create UPI IDs on the BharatPe app to make payments to individuals, merchants, and pay various bills directly through the app.
- ★ The BharatPe UPI app is currently available for Android users, with a launch on Apple’s App Store planned in the coming months.
- ★ BharatPe now offers two apps - “BharatPe” for general users and “BharatPe for Business” for merchants.
- ★ The app supports various payment functions including scan and pay, pay to UPI ID, bank transfers, balance checks, collection requests, and utility bill payments.
- ★ The app includes a UPI Lite feature, allowing customers to preload an online wallet and make transactions up to ₹500 without using a UPI PIN, for both person-to-person (P2P) and person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions.

Karnataka Bank to Provide Personal Loans

- ★ Karnataka Bank will offer personal loans through the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), becoming the first bank to do so.

- ★ The personal loans will be available through buyer apps on the ONDC network.
- ★ Initially, this service will be available to the bank's existing customers.

Star Health Introduces Insurance Policy in Braille

- ★ Star Health and Allied Insurance Company Limited has introduced an insurance policy in Braille named 'Special Care Gold'.
- ★ The policy is designed for individuals with 40% or more disability and offers comprehensive protection tailored to persons with disabilities (PWD), including those with physical, sensory, or cognitive impairments.
- ★ The Braille version enables visually impaired individuals to independently access and review policy information and makes informed decisions regarding their health and finances.
- ★ The Braille version was produced in collaboration with the National Association of the Blind (NAB).
- ★ According to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, approximately 34 million people in India (2.5% of the population) are visually impaired.
- ★ Star Health also announced a diversity drive to train and employ visually impaired individuals as health insurance agents.
- ★ The launch aligns with the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India's (IRDAI) vision of 'Insurance for All'.

Visa Partners With Pine Labs to Expand Digital Payment Acceptance Nationwide

- ★ Visa, a global leader in digital payments, has partnered with fintech company Pine Labs to expand digital payment acceptance across India.
- ★ The collaboration aims to improve the in-store payment experience for millions of merchants currently using printed QR codes or other low-tech solutions.
- ★ The two companies have jointly unveiled Pine Labs Mini, a sandbox-enabled device for QR, near-field communication (NFC) and card payments.
- ★ It aims to enable small and medium-sized merchants to capitalise on the growing adoption of tap-to-pay card (and smartphone) payments and UPI in India.
- ★ Earlier, Pine Labs' subsidiary Setu had announced the launch of UPISetu, a platform for businesses and developers to tap the ongoing advances in the Unified Payments Interface space.

Max Life Forms Bancassurance Partnership with CSB Bank

- ★ Max Life Insurance Company Limited has entered into a bancassurance partnership with CSB Bank, a private sector bank in India.
- ★ The partnership aims to offer a range of savings, protection, retirement, and group life insurance plans to over 2.5 million CSB Bank customers.
- ★ Max Life will provide its diverse insurance solutions to CSB Bank's customers, helping them to achieve their aspirations and protect their loved ones at different life stages.

- ★ Bancassurance involves an insurance distribution model where insurance companies partner with banks to sell insurance policies.

NABARD Plans to Collaborate with Global Agencies to Establish Carbon Fund

- ★ The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is in discussions with international agencies to establish a carbon fund aimed at addressing challenges posed by climate risk, according to Chairman Shaji K.V at the FIBAC conference in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ★ NABARD has set up a ₹100 crore Climate Change Fund to enhance the capacities of institutions working in rural areas.
- ★ This fund will be utilized to develop innovative products that mitigate climate change challenges.
- ★ The fund is expandable based on demand.
- ★ According to a study by the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), global assets worth nearly \$800 billion are affected annually by climate change.
- ★ In India, the annual impact of climate change on critical infrastructure amounts to around \$30 billion.
- ★ Climate finance taxonomy is a set of guidelines to help direct investments toward climate adaptation and mitigation.
- ★ During the 2024-25 Budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that the Indian government will develop this taxonomy to increase capital availability for climate-related investments.

Paysharp Gets Final RBI Authorization as Payment Aggregator

- ★ Chennai-based fintech startup, Paysharp has received final authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an online payment aggregator (PA).
- ★ It was granted an in-principle license in December 2022 and received final approval in 2023.
- ★ Paysharp is now authorized to onboard merchants and process payments as part of India's payment system.
- ★ Paysharp is one of authorised Payment Aggregators from Tamil Nadu. As on date RBI has authorized 36 payment aggregators including Razorpay, Cashfree and Stripe.

International Solar Alliance and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency

- ★ The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), part of the World Bank Group, and the International Solar Alliance (ISA) has established the MIGA-ISA Solar Facility, a multi-donor trust fund.
- ★ Aim is to accelerate global adoption of solar energy, offering concessional financing tools, including first-loss instruments and reinsurance capacity, to enhance project bankability and lower MIGA guarantee costs.
- ★ Initially, the Facility will focus on Sub-Saharan Africa but plans to expand globally to support solar energy projects. ISA has committed \$2 million in seed funding, with a target to raise \$10 million for the facility.

- ★ The broader Global Solar Facility (GSF) has a target size of \$200 million for Africa, incorporating guarantee, insurance, and investment components.
- ★ The Facility, administered by MIGA, will help mobilize private capital for solar and distributed energy projects by providing cost-effective risk mitigation instruments.
- ★ The World Bank Group and the African Development Bank Group aim to provide at least 300 million people in Africa with electricity access by 2030.

Airtel Payments Bank Teams Up with Noise and NPCI

- ★ Airtel Payments Bank has collaborated with wearables maker Noise and the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to launch a National Common Mobility Card (NCMC)-enabled smartwatch integrated with the RuPay chip.
- ★ The smartwatch, developed by Noise, allows users to perform NCMC-enabled tap and pay transactions, bringing payment capabilities directly to the user's wrist.
- ★ This launch represents the second phase of the partnership between Airtel Payments Bank and Noise.

SBI Life Insurance Launches Digital Film

- ★ SBI Life Insurance has unveiled a new digital film to support the Indian contingent for the Paralympic Games Paris 2024.
- ★ The film aims to highlight the inspiring stories of para athletes: Simran Sharma (runner), Ashok Malik (powerlifter), and Mona Agarwal (shooter), showcasing their indomitable resolve.
- ★ The digital film embodies the theme of 'IRADDE', reflecting the athletes' determination and aligns with SBI Life's philosophy, 'Apne Liye, Apno Ke Liye'.
- ★ It illustrates how the support and strength from loved ones help these Paralympians overcome barriers and achieve their dreams.
- ★ The launch is part of SBI Life Insurance's ongoing commitment to recognizing and supporting the extraordinary spirit of Indian athletes.

Federal Bank Unveils India's First Facial Recognition Payment System, SmilePay

- ★ India's Federal Bank has launched SmilePay, a facial authentication technology that will enable customers to complete transactions using only their faces.
- ★ It is a first-of-its-kind payment solution in India, utilising advanced facial authentication technology and built on UIDAI's BHIM Aadhaar Pay.
- ★ The product eliminates the need for traditional payment methods, offering unmatched convenience for customers and enhanced efficiency for merchants.
- ★ SmilePay was launched at the Global Fintech Fest by Shalini Warriar, Executive Director, Federal Bank.

Aditya Birla Capital Digital Unveils DigiGold Gifting, Family Health Scan

- ★ Aditya Birla Capital Digital Limited (“ABCDDL”), the digital-first arm of India’s leading financial services conglomerate, Aditya Birla Capital, announced the launch of a suite of three new product offerings - DigiGold Gifting, Family Health Scan and SIMPLiNVEST on ABCD, omnichannel D2C platform at the Global Fintech Festival.
- ★ These new offerings are aimed at providing users with a more personalized and convenient digital financial experience, making “Everything Finance as Simple as ABCD”.
- ★ DigiGold Gifting: Gifting digital gold is a new feature, wherein ABCD app users can seamlessly gift their friends and family digital gold using the recipient’s mobile number.
- ★ Family Health Scan: This is an innovative, selfie-based, free Health Scan feature which is available under ‘My Track’ section of the ABCD app.
- ★ It has now expanded to cover up to 5 family members.
- ★ SIMPLiNVEST: Currently in beta version, SIMPLiNVEST is an industry-first solution which enables users to undertake systematic investments across various asset classes like mutual funds, stocks and digital gold through a single, intuitive journey.

South Indian Bank Partners with Sohan Lal Commodity Management

- ★ South Indian Bank and Sohan Lal Commodity Management (SLCM) have announced a collaboration to deliver “Unified Collateral Management Solutions”, aimed at supporting farmers and other stakeholders within the agricultural ecosystem.
- ★ This collaboration will facilitate access to post-harvest credit at competitive interest rates, while also providing scientific storage services and ensuring fair commodity pricing at marketplaces (mandis).
- ★ The partnership is aimed to tackle key challenges in the agricultural sector, particularly in post-harvest storage and financing.
- ★ By merging South Indian Bank’s financial expertise with SLCM’s collateral management and warehousing solutions, the collaboration is set to offer a seamless experience to both farmers and agri-businesses.

Tata AIA Life Insurance Launches USD Life Insurance Solutions

- ★ Tata AIA Life Insurance Company Limited, one of India’s leading life insurance agencies, has launched its offshore branch at Gujarat International Finance Tech-City (GIFT City), India’s first International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).
- ★ The branch aims to provide non-resident Indians (NRIs) with US dollar-denominated life insurance through its website.

Mastercard Launches Global Payment Passkey Service

- ★ Mastercard has announced the worldwide launch of its new Payment Passkey Service to enhance the security and convenience of online shopping.

- ★ The service has been introduced in India as a pilot program with major payment players, including payment aggregators Juspay, Razorpay, and PayU, as well as online merchants like Bigbasket and banks such as Axis Bank.
- ★ Payment passkeys use device-based biometric authentication methods, such as fingerprints or facial scans, to streamline online shopping experiences.
- ★ This service replaces traditional passwords and OTPs, making transactions faster and more secure.
- ★ The Payment Passkey Service aims to improve security against fraud and scams while simplifying the transaction process.

POP Introduces India's First Multi-Brand Co-Branded Card

- ★ POP, a fintech enabler for direct-to-consumer brands started by former Flipkart employees, has introduced India's first multi-brand co-branded credit card developed in collaboration with RuPay and Yes Bank.
- ★ This launch coincides with POP surpassing one million UPI transactions and aims to leverage the power of the RuPay network to make credit on UPI easier for its network of users.
- ★ The credit card was launched at the Global Fintech Festival (GFF) in the presence of Mr. Nalin Bansal- Chief of Corporate and Fintech Relationships at NPCI and Mr. Amit Sinha- Head of credit card sales and partnerships at Yes Bank.
- ★ As India's first multi-brand co-branded card, it brings together top brands such as Zomato, Blinkit, Cult, Rapido, Cleartrip, and Pharmeasy, covering key daily expenditure categories like e-commerce, groceries, F&B, travel, and health and fitness.

RBI Fines HDFC Bank and Axis Bank for Non-Compliance

- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has fined the largest private sector bank, HDFC Bank, and the third largest private bank, Axis Bank, for non-compliance with the RBI's regulatory norms.
- ★ The RBI announced the monetary penalties on these two banks on 10 September 2024.
- ★ The Banking Regulation Act of 1949 makes the RBI the regulator of the banks in India and gives it the power to punish banks that fail to follow its rules and regulations.
- ★ The RBI fined Axis Bank ₹1.91 crore for violating the provisions of the Banking Regulation Act 1949 regarding the opening of savings accounts for ineligible persons, failing to issue unique customer identification codes (UCIC), and improperly managing collateral for agricultural loans up to ₹1.60 lakh.
- ★ RBI also fined the bank for its subsidiary's conduct in violating RBI's norms.
- ★ The RBI fined HDFC Bank ₹1 crore for failing to follow RBI's instructions regarding deposit interest rates, recovery agents, and customer service practices

Union Bank of India Becomes First Major Indian Bank to Sign PCAF

- ★ Union Bank of India has announced its decision to join the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF), an international alliance of financial institutions dedicated to standardizing the measurement and disclosure of greenhouse gas emissions related to loans and investments.

- ★ By joining PCAF, Union Bank of India aligns itself with global efforts to measure and manage financed emissions, which are crucial for understanding and mitigating climate risks in banking.
- ★ This decision reflects the bank's commitment to adhering to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recent draft guidelines on climate risk disclosures.
- ★ Becoming a signatory to PCAF enhances the bank's reputation as a responsible financial institution, committed to sustainability and environmental transparency in its operations.

RBL Bank Partners with Indian Oil Corporation Limited

- ★ RBL Bank has launched the 'Xtra Credit Card' in partnership with Indian Oil Corporation (IOCL), providing customers with fuel savings.
- ★ The Card offers customers 8.5% savings on fuel purchases, the highest in the segment compared to other co-branded fuel credit cards.
- ★ Customers can earn 15 fuel points for every ₹100 spent, with a cap of 2,000 points per month.
- ★ RBL Bank holds a 5.04% market share of the total outstanding credit cards in India, as per the Reserve Bank of India data.
- ★ RBL Bank's card competes with IDFC First Power+ credit card with 5% savings (with Hindustan Petroleum) and SBI Octane card with 6.25% savings (with Bharat Petroleum).

State Bank of India Plans to Raise Up to ₹7,500 Crore through Tier-2 Bonds

- ★ State Bank of India (SBI) is expected to raise up to ₹7,500 crore through the issuance of tier-2 bonds.
- ★ The funds raised will be used to meet regulatory requirements and support business growth, addressing the gap between credit demand and deposit accretion.
- ★ The bond sale is likely to occur on September 18, with the pay-in date on September 19.
- ★ The remaining amount will be raised through a greenshoe option.
- ★ The upcoming tier-2 bond sale is anticipated to have a coupon rate of around 7.40%.
- ★ For comparison, SBI had previously issued 15-year tier-2 bonds on August 28 with a coupon rate of 7.42%.
- ★ SBI's bonds typically offer lower coupon rates compared to other debt instruments issued by banks.

DICGC Introduces Daava Sookhak Tool

- ★ The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) has introduced an online tool named Daava Sookhak, designed for depositors to track the status of their insurance claims.
- ★ Since its inception, DICGC has been responsible for reimbursing insured amounts to depositors of banks that have failed.
- ★ Daava Sookhak, a user-friendly online tool, is part of DICGC's ongoing commitment to improving the services provided for depositors.
- ★ The corporation ensures that all categories of deposits with banks except institutional deposits.

- ★ The deposit insurance coverage limit has been enhanced six times since 1962, from ₹1,500 per depositor held in the same right and same capacity at all the branches of the insured bank to ₹5,00,000 on February 04, 2020.
- ★ At present, 97.8% of the total deposit accounts are fully protected. Of the remaining 2.2% of accounts, deposits are insured up to the limit of ₹5 lakh.
- ★ All banks operating in India are registered with the corporation for deposit insurance.
- ★ The number of banks registered with DICGC was 1,997 as of March 31, 2024, of which 140 were commercial banks and 1,857 were co-operative banks.

PayMate Teams Up with NPCI Bharat BillPay Limited

- ★ PayMate, India's leading digital B2B payments company has announced its partnership with NPCI Bharat BillPay Limited. (NBBL) to launch the innovative PayMate BBPS-B2B platform.
- ★ The BBPS-B2B platform aims to standardise and digitize commercial processes related to invoicing, payments, and collections on a large scale across the nation.
- ★ The platform is designed to foster an interoperable ecosystem between buyers and suppliers, enhancing connectivity and efficiency.
- ★ The partnership targets 634 lakh (6.34 million) MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) and 16.6 lakh (1.66 million) corporates in India.
- ★ Through the BBPS-B2B platform, PayMate will offer its customers the option to connect with multiple lenders to get the best rates for capital and avail best financing offers to drive business growth.

AU Small Finance Bank and United India Insurance Sign Agreement

- ★ AU Small Finance Bank (AU SFB) and state-owned United India Insurance Company (UIIC) announced a strategic partnership to distribute general insurance solutions to the bank's customers.
- ★ The partnership will provide a range of insurance products including motor insurance, personal accident insurance, crop insurance, property insurance, shopkeeper insurance, and cyber incident insurance.
- ★ The collaboration utilizes UIIC's extensive network of branches in over 1,000 tier 2 and tier 3 locations, complementing AU SFB expanding infrastructure and customer base.
- ★ The partnership enhances AU SFB's position as a preferred choice for customers across 21 states and 4 union territories in India.
- ★ AU SFB has recently applied for a universal banking license with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and is focusing on expanding its bancassurance portfolio to offer technology-enabled insurance solutions to its customer base of over 1 crore.

Bank of Baroda Approves Resolution Plan for Supertech's Dehradun Project

- ★ Bank of Baroda, one of the lenders in Supertech Group has approved and sanctioned the resolution plan for company's Dehradun project paving way for delivery of over 600 homebuyers.

- ★ Supertech submitted a project-wise resolution plan to the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), and this is the first project to receive lender approval.
- ★ The bank has consented to the inclusion of a co-developer in the Dehradun project.
- ★ Kotak Investment Advisors Ltd (KIAL) is investing ₹450 crore into Supertech's stalled Noida project, providing significant financial support.
- ★ The 'Supernova' project in Noida, which is 50% complete, includes the tallest residential tower in NCR.
- ★ It has a potential revenue of over ₹7,000 crore.
- ★ The revival of Supernova is expected to help Supertech resume other delayed projects.
- ★ Supertech needs to deliver over 15,000 homes and has liabilities of approximately ₹8,000 crore, with project receivables exceeding ₹14,000 crore

RBI Cancels Treasury Bill Auction for the Remainder of September 2024

- ★ According to the Calendar for Auction of Government of India Treasury Bills for the Quarter ending September 2024, the auctions were initially scheduled for September 18, 2024, and September 25, 2024.
- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in consultation with the Government of India, has decided to cancel the T-bill auctions scheduled for September 18, 2024, and September 25, 2024.
- ★ The Government of India has reduced its borrowings through Treasury Bills by approximately ₹50,000 crore for the current fiscal year.

IRDAI Fines SBI Life Insurance

- ★ The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has fined SBI Life Insurance ₹1 crore for regulatory violations.
- ★ The violations pertain to SBI Life Insurance's dealings with insurance web aggregators and its outsourcing activities.
- ★ IRDAI has issued an advisory to SBI Life Insurance regarding the repudiation of multiple insurance claims.
- ★ SBI Life Insurance was found to have engaged with web aggregators without clearly specifying the services provided and the associated fees.
- ★ The company failed to report outsourcing payments to IRDAI as required.
- ★ IRDAI has instructed SBI Life Insurance to develop a comprehensive outsourcing policy that complies with existing regulations and guidelines.

Bank of Baroda to Roll Out 7 Phygital Branches as A Pilot Project

- ★ Bank of Baroda (BoB) is planning to launch 7 phygital branches as a pilot project across the country.
- ★ These branches integrate self-service and assisted service models.
- ★ The first phygital branch was opened at Horniman Circle, Mumbai in July.

- ★ The second branch was inaugurated at Vile Parle, Mumbai, and another branch at Chanda Nagar, Hyderabad.
- Video Contact Centre: Allows customers to connect with the bank's contact center through video calls for non-financial services.
- Self-Service Kiosk: Equipped with tablets for services such as PAN updation, account statements, and TDS certificates.
- Service Areas: Includes exclusive service areas and universal service counters staffed by branch executives to assist with customer needs.
- Integration: The branches integrate self-service and assisted service models, aiming to provide a seamless customer experience.

NPCI Raises Unified Payments Interface Transaction Limit

- ★ The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has increased transaction limits for tax payments using the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), allowing people to transfer ₹5 lakh in a single transaction.
- ★ This service is only applicable for tax payments only.
- ★ The increase in the transaction limit aims to facilitate smoother and larger tax payments through UPI, addressing the growing use of UPI as a payment method.
- ★ This change follows the Reserve Bank of India's recommendation during the Monetary Policy Committee meeting on August 8, 2024.
- ★ The ₹5 lakh limit applies exclusively to tax payments.
- ★ For other categories of payments, the UPI transaction limit remains ₹1 lakh. NPCI's circular specifies that acquiring entities must classify merchants under MCC-9311 for tax payments only.
- ★ Merchants are required to enable UPI as a payment mode for this increased limit.
- ★ NPCI has directed banks, payment service providers (PSPs), and UPI applications to ensure that the ₹5 lakh limit is strictly applied to tax payments to maintain transparency.

PhonePe and Liquid Group Partner to Expand UPI QR Payment Services

- ★ PhonePe, a Walmart group fintech firm, partnered with Liquid Group, a cross-border payment solutions provider, to expand its merchant acceptance network in Singapore.
- ★ The partnership enables PhonePe users traveling to Singapore to scan and pay using the app at Liquid Group's merchants.
- ★ QR codes will be available at tourist-centric locations, such as Changi Airport, duty-free shops, restaurants, bars, retailers (e.g., The Cocoa Trees, Hard Rock Cafe), sightseeing spots, and transportation services.
- ★ The collaboration is enabled by Liquid Group's partnership with NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), an arm of NPCI focused on global payments.
- ★ Liquid Group has enabled its merchants to accept UPI (Unified Payments Interface) as a payment method, allowing Indian travelers to use their UPI apps for payments.
- ★ Transactions will be processed in Indian Rupees (INR), ensuring transparency and ease of use for Indian users.

Axis Bank Expands Wealth Management Services to 15 Additional Cities

- ★ Axis Bank is expanding its private banking business, Burgundy Private, to 15 new cities.
- ★ This expansion will increase Burgundy Private's presence to 42 locations across India.
- ★ The expansion aims to provide bespoke wealth management services to clients in India's Tier 2 markets.
- ★ The new cities include Bhubaneswar, Patna, Raipur, Agra, Ghaziabad, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Jalandhar, Meerut, Belgaum, Kozhikode, Thiruvananthapuram, Aurangabad, Nagpur, and Gandhidham.

HDFC Bank Aims to Increase Income for 5 Lakh Marginal Farmers by 2025

- ★ The country's biggest private sector lender, HDFC Bank, looks to increase the income of 5 lakh marginal farmers earning less than ₹60,000 annually by 2025 as part of its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative, Parivartan.
- ★ Parivartan is one of India's largest CSR programs, active in 28 states and 8 Union Territories, with a focus on rural development and sustainable livelihoods.
- ★ Key initiatives include:
 - Skill training for 2 lakh individuals to promote self-sufficiency.
 - Bringing 2 lakh acres of unirrigated land under irrigation to improve agricultural productivity.
 - Providing 25,000 scholarships to meritorious underprivileged students for better access to education.
 - Parivartan aligns its efforts with 9 of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on areas like education, skill development, healthcare, and financial inclusion.

Life Insurance Corporation of India Partners with Infosys

- ★ The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has selected IT major Infosys to develop its NextGen digital platform.
- ★ This platform will be a comprehensive end-to-end digital insurance solution aimed at providing excellent customer services, sales lifecycle management, and operational support for employees and intermediaries.
- ★ The NextGen Digital Platform will be modular, flexible, cloud-native, and have platform driven architecture which will be capable of quickly adopting innovative technologies, new products and features.
- ★ This platform will form the foundation for building high value business applications such as the Customer and Sales Super Apps, Portals and Digital Branch for LIC.
- ★ Infosys will deliver turnkey system integration services to LIC, utilizing AI capabilities from Infosys Topaz and DevSecOps services from Infosys Cobalt.
- ★ Also, LIC has undertaken a digital transformation programme named DIVE (Digital Innovation and Value Enhancement).

- ★ Under DIVE, LIC aims to significantly boost its digital platform with an aim to provide superior experience to its customers, field force, partners and employees.

Star Health and Policybazaar Introduce ‘SUPER STAR’

- ★ Star Health and Allied Insurance Company Limited (Star Health Insurance) and Policybazaar announced the launch of ‘SUPER STAR’, a personalised long-term health insurance plan which is customer-centric in nature with an objective of delivering greater customer value.
- ★ This game-changer product is designed to meet the evolving needs of policyholders and offers unparalleled flexibility and customization.
- ★ SUPER STAR is a digital-only product available through the Policybazaar website and Star Health’s online portal here.
- ★ The Super Star plan has multiple sum insured options ranging from ₹5 lakh to ₹1 crore.
- ★ Customers will get up to 7.5% discount while purchasing the same policy for their parents or parents-in-law.

AU Small Finance Bank and Kotak Life

- ★ AU Small Finance Bank (AU SFB) and Kotak Life announced a partnership to offer life insurance and financial security solutions.
- ★ This collaboration is a continuation of Kotak Life’s previous relationship with the former Fincare Small Finance Bank, which is now merged with AU SFB.
- ★ This partnership enables AU SFB’s new and existing customers, including those from former Fincare SFB branches, to access Kotak Life’s full range of life insurance products, such as term, retirement, savings, and select investment plans.

BoB Launches GenAI-Powered Virtual Relationship Manager for Conversational Banking

- ★ Bank of Baroda (BoB) has introduced ‘Aditi’, a GenAI-powered Virtual Relationship Manager, to enhance the digital customer service experience.
- ★ Aditi offers conversational banking through digital avatars with human-like interfaces.
- ★ Available on BoB’s web portal, Aditi supports audio, video, and chat-based assistance, providing 24 × 7 banking services with multilingual support.
- ★ BoB also launched a GenAI-enabled knowledge management platform called ‘GyanSahay.AI’ for its employees.
- ★ The platform provides employees with instant and accurate answers, helping them handle customer queries more efficiently.
- ★ It is trained in the bank’s product policies and processes, aiming to enhance customer satisfaction and service delivery.
- ★ The GenAI-enabled platform aims to empower BoB’s customer-facing workforce by providing the right information on products, policies, and processes, improving service delivery.

- ★ BoB plans to recruit specialised and skilled resources to drive the large-scale adoption of artificial intelligence technologies in its banking operations and services.

World Bank Commits Additional USD 2 Billion to Bangladesh

- ★ The World Bank pledged an additional \$2 billion in financing to Bangladesh during this fiscal year to support critical reforms, flood response, air quality improvement, and healthcare.
- ★ The World Bank is committed to increasing lending to Bangladesh to support the reform agenda of the Interim Government.
- ★ USAID-Bangladesh recently announced \$202.25 million in aid to Bangladesh to advance development, empower youth, strengthen democracy, improve health, and expand trade and economic opportunities.
- ★ The World Bank plans to repurpose an additional \$1 billion from existing programmes in consultation with the government, bringing the total financial assistance to around \$3 billion.
- ★ Muhammad Yunus requested the World Bank to provide technical support to recover stolen assets siphoned off by corrupt individuals during the previous governments rule.

Punjab and Sind Bank to Raise Up to ₹3,000 Crore Through Infrastructure Bonds

- ★ Public sector lender, Punjab and Sind Bank plans to raise up to ₹3,000 crore through infrastructure bonds as a cost-effective option amid increasing competition for deposits.
- ★ Public sector banks, including Punjab & Sind Bank, are actively raising funds through infrastructure bonds in FY25.
 - State Bank of India (SBI) raised ₹20,000 crore in two tranches through 15-year infra bonds.
 - Canara Bank raised ₹10,000 crore via 10-year infra bonds at a 7.4% rate.
 - Bank of India raised ₹5,000 crore through 10-year bonds at 7.54%.
- ★ CRISIL has assigned a “AA/Stable” rating to the proposed infrastructure bonds of Punjab & Sind Bank.
- ★ Bond yields softened in August and September 2024, with the 10-year Indian government security (G-sec) yield ranging between 6.76% and 6.87%.

ADB Recommends Pakistan Implement Indian ULLAS Scheme

- ★ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) advised Pakistan to adopt India’s ULLAS (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society) scheme to address its dysfunctional education system and provide quality training to its citizens.
- ★ Pakistan requested financial support from the ADB to improve its education system and address the issue of educating 26 million out-of-school children.
- ★ ULLAS was launched by the Government of India in July 2023 to assist non-literates and adults who missed formal schooling.
- ★ The scheme aims to provide foundational literacy and numeracy, along with critical life skills such as financial literacy, digital literacy, healthcare awareness, and family welfare.

- ★ Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved ULLAS as a centrally-sponsored scheme for a five-year period to promote the goal of “Education for All”.
- ★ The recommendation came just before the scheduled visit of ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa to Pakistan.
- ★ Pakistan declared an education emergency on International Literacy Day to address the challenge of educating millions of out-of-school children.

UCO Bank Unveils “Project Parivartan” To Enhance the Bank’s Digital Banking Services

- ★ Ashwani Kumar, Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), UCO Bank launched “Project Parivartan”, a major transformation initiative in the existing digital banking facilities offered by the Bank.
- ★ Key points of Project Parivartan include close collaboration with Fintechs and technology providers, customer engagement through personalization, analytics-driven campaigns, and the enhancement of digital journeys for both asset as well as liability products.
- ★ The project underscores the Bank’s commitment to embracing the future of Banking through cutting-edge digital solutions.
- ★ With the launch of Project Parivartan, Bank introduced several new end to end digital lending products.
- ★ Apart from above, InBank’s continuous endeavour to enhance customer experience Bank has also launched UPI Circle and UPI Lite Auto Top-Up in issuer mode along with several new enhancements to existing mobile banking and internet banking services.

Piramal Finance Collaborates with Digital India’s Common Service Centers

- ★ Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Ltd (Piramal Finance), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Piramal Enterprises Ltd, has partnered with Digital India’s Common Service Centers (CSCs) to meet the lending needs of Bharat by improving access to formal credit for underserved individuals and MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises).
- ★ Through this collaboration, over ₹100 crore has been successfully disbursed in August 2024 to boost credit availability in semi-urban areas, providing essential financial products such as home and business loans.
- ★ By leveraging CSC’s extensive network of over 6 lakh centres, this initiative aims to support budget customers in tier 2 and tier 3 cities, effectively addressing the financial needs of underserved regions and advancing financial inclusion.
- ★ CSCs are a key component of the Digital India initiative launched by the Government of India.
- ★ These centers aim to provide essential government and non-government services to citizens, particularly in rural and remote areas, through digital means.

OLX Teams up with IDFC FIRST Bank

- ★ OLX has launched a comprehensive used-vehicle financing solution in collaboration with IDFC FIRST Bank.

- ★ This new service simplifies the purchasing process for pre-owned cars and bikes by offering quick and easy financing directly through the OLX platform, eliminating the need for multiple site visits.
- ★ The collaboration aims to provide OLX customers with accessible vehicle financing directly on the platform.
- ★ Buyers can now easily secure financing for pre-owned cars and bikes, streamlining the entire transaction process.

ADB Projects 7% Growth for Indian Economy in 2024-25

- ★ The Asian Development Bank, in its latest report, Asian Development Outlook, released in September 2024, has projected a growth rate of 7 per cent for the Indian economy in 2024-25 and 7.2 per cent in 2025-26.
- ★ The ADB's forecast is in line with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund's forecast of 7 per cent growth for the Indian economy in 2024-25.
- ★ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has projected the Indian economy's growth rate of 7.2 per cent in 2024-25.
- ★ According to the ADB's latest report, despite global challenges, the Indian economy has shown remarkable resilience.

NPCI Plans to Expand UPI Digital Payments to Africa and South America

- ★ India is in discussions with several countries in Africa and South America to help them build digital payment systems using the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) as a model.
- ★ Two UPI-like systems are expected to launch by late 2026 or early 2027.
- ★ The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) oversees retail payment systems in India and operates UPI, the most popular digital payment method in the country.
- ★ UPI's monthly transaction volume surged by 41% to nearly 15 billion in August, 2024.
- ★ NPCI's international arm, NIPL, promotes the adoption of India's payment systems overseas.
- ★ NIPL has held discussions with at least 20 countries in Africa and South America for developing UPI-like payment systems.
- ★ Agreements with Peru and Namibia have been signed to help them develop real-time payment systems, with expected launches by 2026-2027.
- ★ NIPL plans to double its current 60-member team by March 2025, expanding its overseas operations beyond Singapore and the Middle East.

Axis Bank and Mastercard Partner to Introduce Credit Card

- ★ Axis Bank, and Mastercard, a global technology company in the payments industry, announced their collaboration to launch MyBiz, a business credit card designed exclusively for sole proprietors and small business owners.
- ★ The new card, part of the World Mastercard category, combines a wide range of business and travel benefits to meet the diverse needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) owners.

- ★ Cardholders will be able to gain access to specially curated experiences around culinary, wellness, sports, and more via priceless.com for India-based experiences.

PayU Launches First-Ever Biometric Authentication Solution

- ★ PayU, one of India's leading digital financial services providers, has introduced an industry-first biometric authentication solution for card payments - Flash Pay.
- ★ The solution aims to simplify the payment experience, improve transaction success rates, and significantly enhance security for users.
- ★ Flash Pay was unveiled at the Global Fintech Festival (GFF) 2024, a prestigious event in the fintech sector.
- ★ The biometric solution offers a seamless payment experience while incorporating robust security measures, aligning with customer desires for convenience and banks' authentication needs.
- ★ Flash Pay was successfully demonstrated at the GFF 2024 in collaboration with South Indian Bank, which has been a long-standing partner of Wibmo (a PayU subsidiary).

India's Net Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Increases to \$5.5 Billion

- ★ According to the latest report by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), India's net foreign direct investment (FDI) during the April-July period of the current financial year (FY25) rose to \$5.5 billion compared to \$3.8 billion in the year-ago period.
- ★ The increase was due to an improvement in gross inward FDI, which grew by 23.6 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) to \$27.7 billion during the four months of FY25.
- ★ Manufacturing, financial services, communication services, computer services, electricity, and other energy sectors accounted for more than three-fourths of the gross FDI inflows.
- ★ The major source countries were Singapore, Mauritius, the Netherlands, the US, Belgium, and Japan.
- ★ FDI has three components: equity capital, reinvested earnings and other capital.
- ★ Equity capital is the foreign direct investor's purchase of shares of an enterprise in a country other than its own.
- ★ Reinvested earnings comprise the direct investor's share (in proportion to direct equity participation) of earnings not distributed as dividends by affiliates, or earnings not remitted to the direct investor.

HDFC Life forms a tri-party partnership with Metropolis and CallHealth

- ★ HDFC Life, one of India's leading life insurers, has entered into a bespoke agreement with Metropolis Healthcare Limited, a leading Indian diagnostic company, and CallHealth, an integrated healthcare platform respectively.
- ★ This collaboration enables prospects applying for HDFC Life policies to undergo medical tests at Metropolis labs across the country, offering a seamless and convenient experience.
- ★ Under this agreement, individuals can choose to visit a Metropolis lab close to their home or go for the home visit option, providing flexibility and ease for all customers.

Mahindra Finance collaborates with UGRO Capital

- ★ Mahindra Finance has entered into a co-origination partnership with UGRO Capital to provide affordable loans to MSMEs (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises).
- ★ The collaboration aims to provide secured business and affordable loans against properties (LAP) to the Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise (MSME) sector, supporting their business growth.
- ★ The partnership aims to improve credit access for MSMEs, offering them timely financial support across various locations.
- ★ UGRO Capital has also previously formed a co-lending partnership with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to support MSMEs.

BUSINESS NEWS

Shivraj Singh Chouhan Launches AgriSURE Fund for Agriculture Start Ups

- ★ The Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Minister for Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, launched the AgriSURE fund in New Delhi on 3 September 2024.
- ★ The Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her 2022-23 Union Budget speech, announced the creation of a dedicated fund to finance startups for agriculture and rural enterprises.
- ★ The AgriSURE Fund or Agri Fund for Start-ups and Rural Enterprises is a Category -II Alternative Investment Fund (AIF) registered with the Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
- ★ The fund will be managed by NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development)
- ★ It will be under the regulation of the capital market regulator SEBI.
- ★ The total corpus of the AgriSURE Fund will be ₹750 crore. The government of India, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare, will contribute ₹250 crore, NABARD will contribute ₹250 crore, and banks, insurance companies, private investors, etc., will invest the rest of the amount.
- ★ NABVENTURES Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of NABARD, will be the Fund's Investment Manager.
- ★ The Fund is a closed ended scheme and has duration of 10 years which can be extended by 2 years.

Meta Partners with Telangana Government

- ★ Meta has announced a two-year strategic partnership with the Department of Information Technology, Electronics, and Communications (IT, E&C) of the Government of Telangana.
- ★ This collaboration aims to leverage the latest advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance e-governance and citizen services in the state.

- ★ The partnership focuses on empowering public officials and citizens with emerging AI technologies to transform public service delivery and improve e-governance.
- ★ Meta will deploy its open-source Generative AI technologies, including the latest Llama 3.1 model.
- ★ The integration will enhance the efficiency and productivity of government departments and agencies, offering innovative solutions for various public services.

Swiggy Partners with the Indian Government

- ★ Swiggy, India's leading on-demand convenience platform, has partnered with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) to launch "Swiggy Skills".
- ★ The initiative aims to provide skilling and employment opportunities within Swiggy's expansive food delivery and quick commerce network.
- ★ "Swiggy Skills" was formally launched by Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Minister of State for Education.
- ★ "Swiggy Skills" aims to bridge the skills gap in India's rapidly growing food and retail sectors by equipping individuals with relevant skills.
- ★ The collaboration represents a proactive effort to prepare a skilled workforce capable of thriving in India's evolving digital economy.

NaBFID Notified as a Public Financial Institution

- ★ The government has designated the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) as a "public financial institution" under the Companies Act, 2013.
- ★ This move aims to strengthen the country's infrastructure finance framework and enhance NaBFID's role in funding large-scale projects.
- ★ NaBFID is a specialized Development Finance Institution (DFI) set up in 2021 under The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development Act, 2021.
- ★ Its key goals include bridging gaps in long-term non-recourse financing for infrastructure, fostering the development of bonds and derivatives markets, and driving sustainable economic growth.
- ★ As a public financial institution, NaBFID can now more effectively attract funding and provide financial support to large-scale infrastructure projects.
- ★ This enhanced role is crucial for addressing India's infrastructure financing needs and supporting the development of a robust financial market for infrastructure.
- ★ The notification reinforces NaBFID's position as a key player in India's infrastructure finance ecosystem, helping the country address its infrastructure funding challenges.

DEFENCE

Nuclear Powered INS Arighat Submarine Inducted into Indian Navy

- ★ The Indian Navy commissioned its second nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), INS Arighat.
- ★ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inducted the submarine in a low-key ceremony during his visit to the Eastern Naval Command in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- ★ The induction of the second vessel in the planned five Arihant-class nuclear-powered submarines is expected to strengthen India's nuclear triad capability and second strike capability.
- ★ Nuclear triad capability refers to the ability of a country to launch nuclear weapons from air, sea and land.
- ★ Second strike capability refers to a country's ability to launch a nuclear weapon on an enemy after being first hit by the enemy's nuclear weapon.
- ★ Like the INS Arihant, the INS Arighat is powered by an 83 MW pressurised light water nuclear reactor with better stealth (noise) capability.
- ★ The less noise a submarine produces, the harder it is to be detected by the enemy.
- ★ The 112-meter-long INS Arighat can achieve a maximum speed of 12-15 knots on the surface and up to 24 knots when submerged.

Indian Army Launches Project NAMAN

- ★ The Indian Army launched the first phase of Project NAMAN in the presence of General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff, and Mrs. Sunita Dwivedi, President of the Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA).
- ★ Project NAMAN is designed to provide dedicated support and services to Defence Pensioners, Veterans, and their families.
- ★ It is centred on the implementation of the SPARSH (System for Pension Administration Raksha) digital pension system to streamline pension-related processes.
- ★ SPARSH is a digital pension administration system that addresses the need for accessible facilitation points for Defence Pensioners and Next of Kin (NOK) across India.
- ★ In the first phase, 14 Common Service Centres (CSCs) have been established at key locations across India.
- ★ HDFC Bank is the banking partner providing necessary IT infrastructure for operationalizing the CSCs.

Indian Navy to Rescue South African Navy Submarine Crew in Distress

- ★ The Indian Navy has signed an agreement with the South African Navy to rescue its Submarine personnel who have met an accident or are in distress in the deep sea.

- ★ This agreement between the two Navies will further strengthen the longstanding maritime relationship between India and South Africa.
- ★ The agreement, officially called the Implementing Agreement, was signed by the Indian Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi, and the Chief of the South African Navy, Vice Admiral Monde Lobese.
- ★ Under the Implementing Agreement, the Indian Navy will provide rescue assistance to the South African Navy in case its submarine meets an accident or is in distress.
- ★ The Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV) is used to rescue sunken submarine personnel. The DSRV is towed to the rescue site by a mother ship.
- ★ The DSRV dives at the spot where the submarine has sunk and then mates with it through a hatch. This creates a corridor for the crew of the sunken submarine to enter the DSRV.
- ★ The DSRV surface and the rescued crews are transferred to a ship for further assistance.

Indian Coast Guard Attends 20th HACGAM in Incheon, South Korea

- ★ The Indian Coast Guard attended the 20th Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM) in Incheon, South Korea.
- ★ The 20th HACGAM was hosted by the South Korean Coast Guard at Incheon, South Korea, from 2-6 September 2024.
- ★ On this occasion, the Indian Coast Guard also held its 12th annual bilateral meeting with the South Korean Coast Guard on 4 September 2024.
- ★ During the Incheon meeting, the member nation's Coast Guard discussed issues related to maritime law enforcement, the safety and security of life at sea, marine environment protection, and the illicit trafficking of humans, drugs, weapons, etc.
- ★ The Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM) is an initiative of Japan which organised the first Heads of Asian Coast Guard Agencies Meeting (HACGAM) in 2004 in Japan.

6th India-Saudi Joint Committee on Defence Co-operation Meeting in Riyadh

- ★ The 6th meeting of the India-Saudi Arabia Joint Committee on Defence Co-operation was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- ★ According to the Union Defence Ministry, the two countries discussed ways to expand bilateral co-operation in areas such as military, training, defence industry, research and development, etc.
- ★ The Joint Committee on Defence Co-operation was set up during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Saudi Arabia in October 2019.
- ★ Both countries agreed to establish a Strategic Partnership Council to guide the India-Saudi relationships.
- ★ The Joint Committee Defence Co-operation was one of the four Joint Working Groups established under the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council.

French Navy Host 22nd Varuna Exercise in Mediterranean Sea

- ★ The 22nd edition of the bilateral maritime exercise between India and France, the Varuna exercise concluded.
- ★ The French Navy hosted the exercise from 2 to 4 September 2024 in the Mediterranean Sea.
- ★ India hosted the 21st Varuna exercise in the Arabian Sea in 2023.
- ★ The Indian Navy was represented by its stealth frigate INS Tabar and long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft P81 Poseidon.
- ★ FS Provence, Submarine Suffren, Aircraft F20, Atlantique2, fighters MB339, and Helicopters NH90 Dauphin represented the French Navy.
- ★ It is an annual bilateral naval exercise between the Indians and the French Navy.
- ★ Both countries conduct Army Air Force and Naval exercises to strengthen military-to-military relations.

20th and Largest Edition of Yudh Abhyas

- ★ The 20th edition of the annual India-US Joint military exercise code-named Yudh Abhyas 2024 commenced at the Foreign Training Node in Mahajan Field Firing Ranges, Rajasthan on 9 September 2024.
- ★ The 2024 Yudh Abhyas will be conducted from 9-22 September 2024.
- ★ The Indian contingent mainly comprises a battalion of the Rajput Regiment of the Indian Army and personnel from other arms and services.
- ★ The United States is represented by the personnel of its Indo-Pacific Command. The US contingent comprises the 1-24 Battalion personnel of the Alaska-based 11th Airborne Division.
- ★ At the Yudh Abhyas 2024, military exercise will involve both command post exercise and field training exercise.
- ★ The command post-exercise will focus on the United Nations peacekeeping operations in a military setting.
- ★ The field training exercise will focus on fundamental warfighting skills in a semi-desert condition jointly and to enhance their combined operational capacity.

Indian Army and Indian Air Force signs MoU with Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya

- ★ To enhance the skills and capability building of personnel from the Indian Army and Indian Air Force, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya, Vadodara.
- ★ The MoU aims to enable the two Services to acquire higher expertise in logistics and develop in-house knowledge on various aspects of logistics operations, contributing to the national development plans – PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan 2021 and National Logistics Policy 2022.

- ★ Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh described the collaboration as a monumental partnership that strengthens the logistics backbone of the Armed Forces, aligning with the vision of 'Aatmanirbharta' (self-reliance) in defence.
- ★ The MoU will contribute towards self-reliance in the defence sector by providing the Armed Forces with training in logistics through Indian resources like Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya and promoting indigenous production of equipment.
- ★ The MoU also includes provisions for experiential learning through real-world case studies.

Oman Hosts Indo-Oman Eastern Bridge VII and Al Najah V Exercise

- ★ Indian and Omani military forces will conduct a series of bilateral exercises in September 2024.
- ★ The Indian Army and the Indian Air Force contingent have arrived in Oman to participate in the AL NAJAH - V and Exercise Eastern Bridge - VII, respectively.
- ★ The seventh edition of the bilateral military exercise Exercise Eastern Bridge between the Indian Air Force and the Royal Oman Air Force commenced at the Air Force Base Masirah, Oman, on 11th September 2024.
- ★ The seventh Exercise, Eastern Bridge VII, is scheduled for 11-22 September 2024.
- ★ The Indian Air Force has sent a contingent of MiG-29s, Jaguar fighter planes, and C-17 Globemaster III transport planes.
- ★ The exercise aims to enhance interoperability and operational readiness between the two air forces and bolster their ability to collaborate effectively in diverse scenarios.
- ★ Exercise AL NAJAH has been held between the two countries' forces since 2015 and is held alternately in India and Oman every two years.

VL-SRSAM Missile Successfully Test-Fired By DRDO and Indian Navy

- ★ The Indian Navy, in partnership with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has successfully tested the Vertical Launch Short Range Surface to Air Missile (VL-SRSAM).
- ★ The test was carried out on 12 September 2024 at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur island off the coast of Odisha.
- ★ During the test, the missile equipped with an advanced radio frequency seeker was launched from a land-based vertical launcher, which successfully intercepted a high-speed aerial target flying at a low altitude.
- ★ DRDO is developing the VL-SRAM, which will be manufactured by the Central Government-owned Bharat Dynamic Limited.
- ★ The VL-SRSAM is a short-range surface-to-air ballistic missile that can be launched from an Indian Naval warship.
- ★ The missile is an all-weather, next-generation, quick-reaction missile that will provide defence against supersonic sea-skimming targets like aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and missiles.
- ★ VL-SRSAM is 3,931 mm long, 178 mm in diameter, and 170 kg in weight.

- ★ The strike range of the missile is up to 50 km.

Indian Navy Commissions Submarine Escape Training Facility Vinetra

- ★ The Indian Navy commissioned its indigenously designed and developed Kalvari Submarine Escape Training Facility at its premier submarine training base, INS Satavahana, in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.
- ★ The INS Satavahana is under the Eastern Naval Command of the Indian Navy.
- ★ L & T Defence has constructed the Kalvari Submarine Escape Training Facility, Vinetra (meaning Trainer).
- ★ The Kalvari Submarine Escape Training Facility will train the submarine crews of the Kalvari class of conventional submarines operated by the Indian Navy.
- ★ It will train the crew to save their lives and escape from the submarine when it is in distress due to an accident or under attack.
- ★ The facility is equipped with a five-meter escape tower integrated with an adjacent diving basin.
- ★ The Vinetra facility was developed under the government's Make in India facility and Atma Nirbhar Bharat campaign to make India self-reliant in critical defence technology and facilities.
- ★ The Kalvari class submarine is being constructed in India under Project 75 of the Indian Navy, under which six submarines were to be constructed.

Second Edition of Navika Sagar Parikrama Expedition

- ★ The Indian Navy is all set to launch its second Navika Sagar Parikrama expedition on 2 October 2024.
- ★ The Indian Navy launched its first Navika Sagar Parikrama in 2017, manned by six female crew members, to circumnavigate the globe on board the Indian Naval Sailing Vessel Tarini, or INSV Tarini.
- ★ Lt Commander Vartika Joshi commanded the first Navika Sagar Parikrama.
- ★ The second edition of the Navika Sagar Parikrama will be helmed by Lt Cdr Roopa A from Puducherry and Lt Cdr Dilna K from Calicut.
- ★ The Navik Sagar Parikrama is being conducted by the Indian Naval Sailing Association, based at Naval Headquarters, New Delhi, and Ocean Sailing Node, Goa, under the Southern Naval Command of the Indian Navy.
- ★ Both nodal centres will co-ordinate the INSV Tarini voyage in co-operation with international maritime agencies and authorities.
- ★ The INSV Tarini will start its eight-month journey from Naval Ocean Sailing Node, INS Mandovi, Goa, on 2 October 2024. It is expected to cover 21,600 nautical miles (around 40,000 km), navigating high seas, extreme weather conditions, and three great capes.

Indian Navy Set to Host the 5th edition of Goa Maritime Symposium

- ★ The 5th edition of Goa Maritime Symposium (GMS) 2024 was hosted by the Indian Navy from 23-24 September 24 under the aegis of Naval War College, Goa.

- ★ This edition of the Goa Maritime Symposium was conducted in the newly inaugurated, state-of-the-art Chola building of the Naval War College.
- ★ Goa Maritime Symposium 2024 is a forum for fostering collaborative thinking, co-operation, and mutual understanding between India and key maritime nations of the Indian Ocean Region.
- ★ The theme for GMS 2024 was “Common Maritime Security Challenges in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) – Progressing Lines of Effort to Mitigate Dynamic Threats such as IUU Fishing and Other Illegal Maritime Activities”.
- ★ The theme aligns with the Indian Government’s vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).
- ★ It is focused on non-traditional maritime threats in the IOR, such as Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and other maritime crimes.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

Asia Power Index 2024

- ★ According to the Asian Power Index Report 2024, released recently by the Australian think tank Lowy Institute, India is ranked third most powerful country in Asia after the United States of America and China.
- ★ Last year, India was ranked the fourth most powerful country in Asia in the 2023 report, but in the year 2024, India overtook Japan to be ranked third.
- ★ The Lowy Institute released the first annual Asia Power Index in 2018 to rank the countries in Asia based on their resources and influences.
- ★ The 2024 Asia Power Index Report ranks 27 countries and territories. For the first time, the Southeast Asian country of Timor Leste has been included in the Report.
- ★ The report evaluates the power of the countries on 131 indicators across eight thematic measures: Military Capability and Defence Networks, Economic Capability and Relationships, Diplomatic and Cultural Influence, as well as Resilience and Future Resources.
- ★ The report highlights the changing dynamics of power in the Asian region. The United States of America and China were the only two countries deemed superpowers in Asia, while India was ranked as a middle power.

2024 Global Innovation Index

- ★ The World Intellectual Property Organisation released the 17th edition of the Global Innovation Index on 26 September 2024, ranking the countries on their innovation qualities.
- ★ The Global Innovation Index has been published by the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) every year since 2007.
- ★ In the 17th edition, 133 countries and the world’s top 100 science and technology clusters were ranked based on innovation performance.

- ★ The countries are evaluated using around 80 indicators grouped into four parameters: science and innovation investment, technological progress, technology adoption and the socioeconomic impact of innovation.
- ★ India has been ranked 39th in the 2024 Global Innovation Index.
- ★ Switzerland maintained its position as the top-ranked country, while Angola, an African country, was at the bottom.
- ★ India is the top-ranked country amongst the 38 lower-middle-income group economies.
- ★ Amongst the 10 economies of Central and Southern Asia, India has been ranked 1st.

IMD World Talent Ranking 2024

- ★ The IMD World Talent Ranking 2024 has revealed significant insights into global talent hubs, with Switzerland maintaining its lead in investment, development, and appeal factors.
- ★ The IMD World Talent Ranking 2024 shows the overall ranking for 67 economies.
- ★ The ranking evaluates countries based on their ability to develop, retain, and attract highly qualified domestic and international talent.
- ★ Switzerland excels in quality of life, health infrastructure, educational attainment, statutory minimum wage, and foreign personnel attraction.
- ★ Singapore climbed from 18th in 2014 to 2nd, noted for its rich talent pool, low discrimination, and strong skilled labour availability.
- ★ India ranked 58th, down from 56th 2023 and 52nd in 2022, with a talent score of 40.47.

AWARDS & PRIZES

14th Laadli Media and Advertising Awards for Gender Sensitivity 2024

- ★ The Hindu and thehindu.com received accolades at the 14th Laadli Media and Advertising Awards for Gender Sensitivity 2024.
 - Award Category: Print/Feature/English (Northern Region)
 - Recipient: Senior Assistant Editor Maitri Porecha
 - Article Title: “Talking Therapy: Asha Workers Offer Hope in Rural Madhya Pradesh”
- ★ The article details a community-driven approach in Madhya Pradesh involving the State government, a non-profit, and Accredited Social Health Activists (Asha) to provide doorstep counselling.
- ★ It discusses the difficulties faced by Asha workers, including inadequate compensation and the need to travel rural areas on two-wheelers.
- ★ The piece emphasizes the significant role of Asha workers in enhancing mental health services in rural communities, illustrating their dedication and the positive outcomes of the initiative

2024 Millennium Technology Prize

- ★ Professor Bantval Jayant Baliga, a 76-year-old Indian-American electrical engineer born in Chennai, Tamil Nadu was awarded 2024 Millennium Technology Prize, given by Technology Academy Finland.
- ★ He was awarded for his invention of the Insulated Gate Bipolar Transistor (IGBT).
- ★ Baliga invented the IGBT in the 1980s, a technology that has significantly improved energy efficiency and reduced pollution.

Dr. Dasari Radhika Honored with Prestigious 'Gender Diversity' Award

- ★ Dasari Radhika, Deputy General Manager (HR) at Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), was conferred with the 'Gender Diversity' award by the Indian Steel Association.
- ★ She was recognized for her exemplary leadership in the steel industry, a traditionally male-dominated sector, Dr. Radhika has been instrumental in promoting gender equity, fostering an inclusive workplace, and creating a culture of belongingness.
- ★ Radhika has spent 28 years at RINL, pioneering HR practices and becoming the first woman HR In-charge in several postings.
- ★ She managed industrial relations and employee welfare across challenging zones, especially at the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant.
- ★ Her efforts in psychological counseling, rooted in her background in psychology, have significantly contributed to promoting work-life balance among employees.

Dommaraju Gukesh Receives Young Changemaker Award

- ★ Dommaraju Gukesh, an 18-year-old chess prodigy, was awarded Businessline's Young Changemaker Award.
- ★ The award was accepted by his grandparents, Usha and Shankar Raju, as Gukesh was participating in the 45th Chess Olympiad in Budapest, Hungary.
- ★ Gukesh made history by becoming the youngest chess world championship challenger.
- ★ He has earned a spot in the 2024 Candidates Tournament, making him the third-youngest player in history to do so, following Bobby Fischer and Magnus Carlsen.
- ★ Gukesh crossed the 2700 Elo rating in March 2022, making him the youngest Indian Grandmaster to achieve this.
- ★ At just 16 years and 1 month, he became the third youngest player in the world to surpass the 2700 mark and later reached 2750 Elo as the youngest ever.

Royal Western India Turf Club (RWITC) Honoured Bezan Chenoy

- ★ The Royal Western India Turf Club (RWITC) honoured Bezan Chenoy for completing 50 years as a professional horse trainer.
- ★ The recognition took place at the Pune race course.
- ★ The RWITC Chairman and managing committee felicitated Chenoy, acknowledging his dedication and contributions to Indian horse racing.

- ★ Chenoy remarked, “Fifty years have flown by, but it’s been a great ride”.
- ★ Chenoy started his career as an assistant to Dara Pandole, later traveling to England to advance his training expertise.
- ★ He received his trainer’s license from the RWITC in August 1974 and saddled his first winner, Naval Glory, within a month of getting his license.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) Receives Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar

- ★ Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has been honored with the prestigious Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Government of India.
- ★ This award is presented for excellence in implementing the Official Language policy.
- ★ Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar is the highest national award for excellence in Official Language implementation.
- ★ BHEL’s commendable efforts in promoting and utilizing Hindi in its operations have been acknowledged, reflecting the company’s commitment to enhancing the use of the Official Language.

Dhruvi Patel Wins Miss India Worldwide 2024

- ★ Dhruvi Patel, a Computer Information System student from the USA, has been crowned the winner of Miss India Worldwide 2024, the longest-running Indian pageant outside India.
- ★ Miss India Worldwide is a prestigious beauty pageant that includes contestants from India and the Indian diaspora globally.
- ★ It is organized by the India Festival Committee (IFC), founded and led by Dharmatma Saran in New York City.
 - Winner: Dhruvi Patel (USA)
 - First Runner-Up: Lisa Abdoelhak (Suriname)
 - Second Runner-Up: Malvika Sharma (Netherlands)

Magnus Carlsen and Judit Polgar were Honoured at the FIDE 100 Awards

- ★ At the FIDE 100 Awards ceremony in Hungary, Magnus Carlsen and Judit Polgar were recognized as the best male and female players, respectively.
- ★ This event celebrated the centenary of the International Chess Federation, honouring exceptional contributions to the chess community over the past century.
- ★ The FIDE 100 event marked a significant milestone, celebrating the evolution and impact of chess while recognizing individuals, groups, and organizations that have made remarkable contributions to the game.
 - Best Team – Men: Armenia
 - Best Team – Women: Georgia
 - Best Book: My 60 Memorable Games by Bobby Fischer
 - Advocate for Women in Chess: Jean Michel Rapaire

- Social Impact: Chess for Freedom, Cook County Sheriff's Office
- Best Educator: Abel Talamantez
- Inclusivity: International Physically Disabled Chess Association (IPCA), International Braille Chess Association (IBCA), and International Chess Committee of Deaf (ICCD)
- Best Trainer – Man: Vladimir Tukmakov
- Best Trainer – Woman: Susan Polgar

Tourism Villages Award 2024

- ★ On the occasion of World Tourism Day on 27 September 2024, the Union Ministry of Tourism has announced the winners of the 2024 Best Tourism Villages Competition.
- ★ The representatives of the winning villages and their state tourism officials were conferred awards at a function in New Delhi on September 27, 2024.
- ★ The Ministry introduced the Best Tourism Villages Competition in 2023 to promote tourism in India's soul (village).
- ★ The Best Tourism Villages Competition focuses on identifying and recognising villages that have preserved and promoted cultural and natural assets through community-based values and a commitment to sustainability in all aspects.
- ★ The eight categories were Adventure Tourism, Agri Tourism, Community Based Tourism, Craft, Heritage, Responsible Tourism, Spiritual and Wellness and Village Village.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

TV Somanathan Takes Over as Cabinet Secretary

- ★ India's longest-serving Cabinet Secretary, Rajiv Gauba, retired after five years of service on 30 August 2024.
- ★ He was replaced by Finance Secretary TV Somanathan.
- ★ TV Somanathan is the 33rd Cabinet Secretary of the government of India.
- ★ He has worked in the Central Government, the Tamil Nadu government and the World Bank.
- ★ In Tamil Nadu, he served in various crucial positions. He was the first Managing Director of Metro Rail Corporation Limited, Chennai, and during his tenure, the project's financial closure was achieved.

Chairman of Indian Oil Corporation

- ★ Satish Kumar, Director (Marketing) of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), has taken over as the interim Chairman after Shrikant Madhav Vaidya completed his tenure.
- ★ Satish Kumar has been the Director (Marketing) since October 2021.
- ★ He also held additional charge as Director (Finance) from October 2022 for one year.

- ★ Kumar's career spans 35 years, during which he has held key positions across various regions in India.
- ★ He served as Non-Executive Chairman of Indian Oil Petronas Pvt. Ltd., a joint venture between Indian Oil and Petronas (Malaysia), and as Non-Executive Chairman of Indian Oil Mauritius Ltd, a subsidiary of Indian Oil.

Philips Names Bharath Sesha as New Managing Director for India

- ★ Dutch multinational conglomerate Philips has appointed Bharath Sesha as Managing Director for India, starting September 1, 2024.
- ★ Responsibilities: He will lead Philips' growth strategy in India, oversee the healthcare business based in Gurugram, and manage operations across key locations in India.
- ★ Sesha succeeds Daniel Mazon, who has transitioned to a global role at Philips' headquarters in the Netherlands.
- ★ Before joining Philips, Bharath Sesha was the Managing Director at Heubach Colorants India.
- ★ The appointment comes after Philips reported stronger-than-expected second-quarter results in 2023, with a 9.3% increase in adjusted earnings (EBITA) to 495 million euros.

Arun Goel Appointed as India's New Ambassador to Croatia

- ★ Arun Goel has been appointed as India's next ambassador to Croatia, according to the Ministry of External Affairs.
- ★ Arun Goel is a retired bureaucrat who previously served as the Election Commissioner of India.
- ★ He was appointed as Election Commissioner in November 2022 and resigned in March 2024.
- ★ Before his role as EC, he retired voluntarily from the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) as a 1985-batch Officer of the Punjab cadre.
- ★ Croatia is represented in India through its embassy in New Delhi and consulates in Mumbai and Kolkata.

Abdelmadjid Tebboune Re-elected as Algerian President

- ★ 78-year-old incumbent President Abdelmadjid Tebboune of Algeria was re-elected as the President of Algeria.
- ★ According to Mohamed Charfi, head of the National Independent Authority for Elections, President Abdelmadjid Tebboune secured 94.65 per cent of the valid votes.
- ★ Presidential elections were held in Algeria on 7 September 2024. Out of the 25 million eligible voters, around 5.6 million voted in the election.
- ★ President Abdelmadjid Tebboune was elected for a second five-year term.
- ★ President Abdelmadjid Tebboune was first elected as the President of Algeria in 2019, which was boycotted by the opposition.

DIPAM Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey Appointed as Finance Secretary

- ★ Tuhin Kanta Pandey, a senior bureaucrat and 1987-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) Officer of the Odisha cadre, has been designated as the new Finance Secretary, according to an official order issued by the personnel ministry.
- ★ Pandey is presently serving as the Secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM).
- ★ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet approved Pandey's designation as Finance Secretary.
- ★ The position became vacant following the appointment of TV Somanathan as the Cabinet Secretary last month.
- ★ By convention, the senior-most Secretary in the Union finance ministry is designated as the Finance Secretary.

Chairman of the Advertising Standards Council of India

- ★ Partha Sinha, President and Chief Brand Officer of BCCL, has been appointed as the Chairman of Advertising Standards Council of India's (ASCI) Board of Governors for 2024-25, succeeding Saugata Gupta, MD & CEO of Marico Limited.
- ★ Partha Sinha has previously worked with prominent companies such as Ogilvy, Publicis, BBH, McCann, and Citibank.
- ★ The ASCI is a voluntary self-regulatory organisation of the advertising industry in India.
- ★ ASCI are registered as a non-profit company under section 8 of the Company Act.

Tayyab Ikram Set to be Elected Unopposed as FIH President

- ★ Tayyab Ikram is set to be elected unopposed as the President of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) at its 49th Congress in Muscat, Oman, on November 9.
- ★ The nominations for FIH elections were submitted by the August 31.
- ★ Ikram is the sole candidate for the President's post, representing Hong Kong Macau.
- ★ Ikram has a long association with hockey, having served as a coach for Pakistan and China.
- ★ He is a member of the IOC Olympic Solidarity Commission and has been an Executive Board member of FIH since 2016.
- ★ On November 5, 2022, he was elected as the 13th President of FIH.

Suresh Prabhu Nominated to World Agriculture Forum Board

- ★ Former Union Minister and Rajya Sabha member Suresh Prabhu has been nominated to the World Agriculture Forum (WAF) Board.
- ★ Rudy Rabbinge, Chairman of the WAF Board, stated that Prabhu's expertise will be invaluable in shaping discussions about the future of the agricultural sector.

- ★ The World Agricultural Forum (WAF) is a policy neutral and internationally inclusive agriculture forum that brings together the leaders from the private sector with policy makers and key policy influencers to focus on providing food etc.
- ★ The forum aims to function as a global body dedicated to advancing agricultural development on a worldwide scale.

Managing Director and CEO of Central Depository Services India

- ★ Nehal Vora has been reappointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Central Depository Services India (CDSL) for a second five-year term, from September 18, 2024, to September 17, 2029.
- ★ Nehal Vora has over 25 years of experience in the Indian capital markets, having held significant roles at organizations like BSE, DSP Merrill Lynch, and SEBI.
- ★ CDSL manages more than 130 million demat accounts, making it a leading player in India's depository system.
- ★ CDSL is India's only listed depository and aims to provide secure, reliable, and affordable depository services to market participants.
- ★ It maintains and services over 11.56 crore demat accounts across India.
- ★ In February, 2024 CDSL became the first depository in India to open 60 million active demat accounts.

New Director General of Narcotics Control Bureau

- ★ Anurag Garg has been appointed as the new Director General (DG) of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), effective from the date of assumption of charge until May 23, 2026, or until further orders.
- ★ Garg is a 1993 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) Officer from the Himachal Pradesh cadre and is currently serving as Additional DG in the Border Security Force (BSF).
- ★ The NCB head position was temporarily filled by CRPF DG Anish Dayal Singh following the retirement of the previous DG, S N Pradhan, in August.

28th IAF Chief

- ★ The government of India has appointed the current Vice Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh, as the next Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force.
- ★ Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh will be the 28th Chief of the Indian Air Force.
- ★ Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh graduated from the National Defence Academy and was commissioned into the Indian Air Force as a fighter pilot in December 1984.
- ★ Before being appointed Vice Chief of the Air Staff, he was the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Central Air Command, Prayagraj.
- ★ Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh commanded a MiG-27 squadron and, as a test pilot, led the MiG-29 Upgrade Project Management Team in Moscow, Russia.

- ★ He strongly supports self-reliance in the Indian Air Force and has backed the development of the indigenous fighter plane Tejas.

President of Sri Lanka

- ★ Anura Kumara Dissanayake was sworn in as the 9th President of Sri Lanka for a six-year term.
- ★ The Election Commission of Sri Lanka on 22 September declared Anura Kumara Dissanayake as the winner of the recently held Presidential election after the second round of counting in the Presidential election.
- ★ Anura Kumara Dissanayake replaced Ranil Wickremesinghe as the President of Sri Lanka, who came a distant third in the Presidential election with just 17% of the vote.
- ★ Presidential elections were held in Sri Lanka on 21 September 2024 to elect a new President.
- ★ Anura Kumara Dissanayake is a left-leaning politician and leader of the Marxist political party Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP). In the Presidential election, he was the candidate of the National People Power alliance, of which JVP is a member.

Brand Ambassador for the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

- ★ India's Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW) has appointed Manu Bhaker, the double Olympic medal-winning shooter, as its brand ambassador.
- ★ This decision reflects the ministry's commitment to promoting the marine sector by associating it with a celebrated sports figure like
- ★ She is a renowned shooter who recently won medals at the Paris Summer Olympics.
- ★ She is also the daughter of a marine engineer, making her an ideal candidate to promote India's maritime sector.
- ★ The event, organized by the Chennai Port Authority in collaboration with the Kamarajar Port Authority, emphasized the achievements of these remarkable women and their contributions to nation-building.

Prime Minister of Sri Lanka

- ★ Mrs Harini Amarasuriya, who graduated from Hindu College, Delhi University, was sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Sri Lanka by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on 24 September 2024.
- ★ President Anura Kumara Dissanayake was sworn in as the 9th President of Sri Lanka.
- ★ Mrs. Harini Amarasuriya succeeds Dinesh Gunawardena, who resigned after the previous President, Ranil Wickremesinghe, lost the Presidential election.
- ★ Mrs. Harini Amarasuriya is Sri Lanka's 16th Prime Minister. She is a member of the ruling National People's Power alliance, led by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake.
- ★ She is also the third woman to be appointed as the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka after Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Chandrika Kumaratunga.

Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh HC

- ★ On 25 September 2024, Justice Suresh Kumar Kait was sworn in as the 28th Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.
- ★ Before his appointment as the Chief Justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court by President Draoupadu Murmu, Justice Suresh Kumar Kait was a judge of the Delhi High Court.
- ★ He replaced the acting Chief Justice, Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva.
- ★ Under Article 219 of the Constitution, every person appointed as a judge of the High Court has to take an oath, as mentioned in the Third Schedule of the Constitution.
- ★ The oath is administered by the Governor of the state or a person appointed by the Governor.

Chief Executive Officer of Federal Bank

- ★ V.S. Manian has taken over as Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Federal Bank.
- ★ He replaces Shyam Srinivasan, who retired after leading the bank since September 2010.
- ★ V.S. Manian has over 25 years of experience in the banking sector.
- ★ Prior to joining Federal Bank, he worked at Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited.
- ★ Manian played a significant role in the transformation of Kotak Mahindra Bank from a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) to a prominent private sector bank.

IndiGo Appoints Isidro Porqueras as Chief Operating Officer

- ★ IndiGo has nominated Isidro Porqueras as its new Chief Operating Officer (COO), effective from November 1, 2024 (subject to regulatory approvals).
- ★ He will succeed Wolfgang Prock-Schauer, who is retiring after over seven years in the role.
- ★ He has over 25 years of experience in the aviation sector.
- ★ He previously led operations at Spanish low-cost airline Volotea.
- ★ His appointment as Chief Transformation Officer was strategically important, coinciding with IndiGo's order for 30 A350-900 wide-body aircraft from Airbus in April 2024.

SPORTS

Women's Asian Hockey Champions Trophy 2024

- ★ Rajgir, Bihar, will host the 8th Women's Asian Champions Trophy Hockey Tournament 2024.
- ★ This is the second consecutive time that India will host the tournament.
- ★ India hosted the 7th Women's Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament in Ranchi, Jharkhand, from 27 October to 5 November 2023, which the Indian team won.

- ★ The Asian Hockey Federation President, Dato Fumio Ogura, announced India as the host of the 8th Women's Asian Champions Trophy Hockey Tournament 2024.
- ★ Defending champion and host India, 2024 Paris Olympics silver medallist China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Thailand are expected to participate in the tournament.

Dawid Malan Announces Retirement from International Cricket

- ★ Dawid Malan, the England star and former World No.1 T20I batter, has officially announced his retirement from international cricket.
- ★ His last appearance for England was during the ICC Mens Cricket World Cup 2023.
- ★ Malan played a total of 114 international matches, spanning 22 Tests, 30 ODIs, and 62 T20Is.
- ★ He accumulated 4,416 runs at an average of 37.74, including eight centuries and 31 fifties.
- ★ Malan made his mark with a stunning 44-ball 78 against South Africa on his T20I debut in June 2017.
- ★ He became a dominant force in T20I cricket, where he truly showcased his talent.

Durand Cup

- ★ Guwahati-based North-East United Football Club won its first Durand Cup title, defeating the defending champion Mohun Bagan Super Giant (MBSG) 4-3 in a penalty shootout in the final.
- ★ The final of the 133rd edition of Asia's oldest football tournament was played at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan, Kolkata (West Bengal).
- ★ The 133rd edition of the Durand Cup was hosted by the Durand Football Tournament Society in co-operation with the All India Football Federation (AIFF), Eastern Command of the Indian Army.
- ★ The North-East United Football Club, owned by Bollywood actor John Abraham, received three trophies: the Durand Cup, the Shimla Trophy, and the President's Cup.

Bangladesh wins Maiden SAFF U-20 Championship Football Tournament

- ★ Bangladesh won its maiden SAFF (South Asian Football Federation) Men's U-20 Championship by defeating host Nepal 4-1 in the final.
- ★ The final was played at the ANFA Complex in Lalitpur, Nepal.
- ★ The Bangladeshi team defeated the favourite and defending champion, India, 4-3, in the penalty shootout in the semi-final to progress to the final.
- ★ Nepal defeated Bhutan 4-1 in the penalty shoot-out in the other semi-final to reach the finals.
- ★ The 9th SAFF U-20 Men's Championship football tournament was held in Nepal from 18 to 28 August 2024. The South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) organises this biennial championship.

- Most Valuable Player of the Tournament Award: Mirajul of Bangladesh
- Best Goalkeeper: Md. Asif of Bangladesh
- Fair Play Award: Nepal

Paris Paralympics 2024

- ★ Nitish Kumar won the second gold medal for India at the 2024 Paris Paralympics by winning the final of the men's singles Badminton SL3 class event on 2 September 2024.
- ★ Earlier, Avni Lekhara won India's first gold medal at the Paris Paralympics in the Women's 10m air rifle standing SH1 event.
- ★ The 17th Summer Paralympics for the physically challenged is being held in Paris, France, from 28 August to 8 September 2024.
- ★ 29-year-old world No.1 Nitesh Kumar defeated the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics silver medalist Daniel Bethell of Great Britain in the final 21-14, 18-21, 23-21 to win the gold medal.

2024 Tuanku Muhriz Trophy

- ★ The Indian men's national squash champion, Abhay Singh, won the men's singles title of the 2024 Tuanku Muhriz Trophy.
- ★ In the final played on 1 September 2024, he defeated the top seed Lau Tsz Kwan of Hong Kong, China. This was the 10 PSA (Professional Squash Association) title for Abhay Singh.
- ★ The \$15,000 prize money Tuanku Muhriz Trophy is a Professional Squash Association (PSA) Challenger tournament. It was held in Seremban, Malaysia, from 28 August to 01 September 2024.
- ★ World no 68th ranked player Abhay Singh defeated the world no 48 ranked player Lau Tsz Kwan 3-1 (7-11, 11-8, 12-10, 11-4) in 41 minutes to win his 10th PSA title.

World Deaf Shooting Championship

- ★ The Indian deaf shooter Dhanush Srikanth won three gold medals at the 2024 World Deaf Shooting Championship in Hanover, Germany.
- ★ The International Committee of Sports for the Deaf is organising the 2024 World Deaf Shooting Championship in Hanover, Germany, from 29 August to 8 September 2024.
- ★ Dhanush Srikanth set a new world record in the men's 10m air rifle event with a score of 632.7.
- ★ All three medals in the event were won by Indians: Dhanush bagged the gold, Shourya Saini won the silver, and Mohammed Vania won the bronze.
- ★ Srikanth won his second gold medal in the 10m mixed team event with Mahit Sandhu.
- ★ The Indian team of Mohammed Vania and Natasha Joshi won the silver medal.
- ★ His third gold medal came in the 10m air rifle men's team event, where he partnered Shourya Saini and Mohammed Vania.

Harvinder Wins Gold Medal for India in Archery at Paralympics

- ★ Harvinder Singh became the first Indian para-athlete to win a gold medal in the para-archery event at the Paralympics Games.
- ★ He won a gold medal in the men's individual recurve open event at the 2024 Paris Paralympics.
- ★ In the Men's Club throw, Dharambir and Pranav Soorma won gold and silver medals, respectively.
- ★ 2020 Tokyo Paralympics bronze medalist Harvinder Singh won the gold in the Paris Paralympics. He defeated Poland's Lukasz Cizek 6-0 in the final to clinch the gold medal in the men's individual recurve open event.
- ★ This was India's second medal in para archery after Sheetal Devi and Rakesh Kumar won the bronze medal in the mixed compound open archery event.

Rajasthan Royals Appoints Rahul Dravid as Head Coach

- ★ The Rajasthan Royals, owned by Royals Sports Group, has announced the appointment of Rahul Dravid as their new Head Coach on a multi-year contract.
- ★ Rahul Dravid, who previously served as captain and coach for the Royals from 2011 to 2015, will now return in a new role.
- ★ Dravid initially began his coaching career with the Royals in 2014, transitioning from captain to mentor.
- ★ As Head Coach, Dravid will work closely with Kumar Sangakkara, the Royals' Director of Cricket, to implement and execute the franchise's cricketing strategy.

England All-Rounder Moeen Ali Retires from International Cricket

- ★ Moeen Ali, at 37 years old, decided to retire from international cricket after recognizing that he was no longer in consideration for England's future assignments.
- ★ He felt it was time for the next generation to take over and acknowledged the team's need to rebuild ahead of upcoming tournaments like the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 and the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026.
- ★ Moeen Ali made his international debut in 2014 against the West Indies.
- ★ Moeen Ali transitioned from being primarily a batsman to becoming England's leading bowler in Test cricket.
- ★ He finished his Test career with 204 wickets, placing him third among England's all-time leading spinners, behind Derek Underwood (297) and Graeme Swann (255).

2024 US Open Singles title

- ★ Jannik Sinner of Italy and Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus won the men's and women's singles titles of the 2024 US Open Grand Slam Tennis tournament, respectively.
- ★ It was the first US Open title for Jannik Sinner and Aryna Sabalenka.
- ★ It was the second Grand Slam title for Jannik Sinner and the third Grand Slam title for Aryna Sabalenka.

- ★ The four grand slam events in tennis are the Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon, and US Open.
- ★ The 2024 US Open championship was held in Flushing Meadows, Queens, New York City, the United States of America, from 19 August to 8 September 2024.

4th Intercontinental Cup Men's Football Tournament

- ★ Syria defeated India 3-0 in the last round-robin match to win the 4th Intercontinental Cup men's football championship.
- ★ The Chief Minister of Telangana, Revanth Reddy, presented the winners' trophy to Syrian captain Mahmoud Al-Mawas, also named the Syed Abdul Rahim Player of the Tournament.
- ★ The best player of the tournament is given the Syed Abdul Rahim trophy.
- ★ The All India Football Federation organised the 4th Intercontinental Cup football championship from 3 to 9 September 2024 at the GMC Balayogi Gachibowli Stadium in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- ★ In the 4th Intercontinental Cup Football championship, three teams-India, Syria and Mauritius participated.

ACE Challenger Tour 2024

- ★ Velavan Senthilkumar, a top-seeded Indian squash player, won the ACE Challenger Tour 2024.
- ★ He defeated Noor Zaman of Pakistan with scores of 11-5, 11-6, 11-9 in the final.
- ★ Senthilkumar showcased his form by reaching the semi-finals of the recent Tuanku Muhriz Squash Trophy.
- ★ The tournament was held at the S2 Sports Complex in Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.
- ★ In the ACE Challenger Tour, Senthilkumar won the final in 36 minutes.

63rd Subroto Cup U-17 Boys Title

- ★ Manipur's TG English School won the under-17 boys title of the 63rd Subroto Cup International Football Tournament, defeating Meghalaya's Myngken Christian Higher Secondary School in the final on 11 September 2024.
- ★ The 63rd Subroto Cup International Football Tournament for under-17 boys was held in New Delhi from 2-11 September at New Delhi.
- ★ Subroto Cup is a premier inter-school football tournament in the country in which foreign teams also participate.
- ★ In the 2024 event, school teams from Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka participated in the U-17 Boys title.
- ★ Manipur's TG English School defeated Meghalaya's Myngken Christian Higher Secondary School 4-3 in the penalty shoot-out to lift the U-17 Boys title of the 63rd Subroto Cup International Football Tournament.

- ★ Manipur's TG English School received the trophy and a cheque of ₹5 lakhs, while the runners-up team, Meghalaya's Myngken Christian Higher Secondary School, received a cheque of ₹3 lakhs.
- ★ The Subroto Cup International Football Tournament is an interschool football tournament.

Belgian International Badminton Tournament

- ★ Emerging Indian badminton talent Anmol Kharb won her career's first Senior International Badminton title by winning the 2024 Belgian International Badminton Tournament women's singles title.
- ★ The 17-year-old unseeded Anmol Kharb, ranked 222 in the world, defeated world No.80 ranked Denmark's Amalie Schulz 24-22, 12-21, 21-10 in the final.
- ★ The Belgian International Badminton Tournament 2024 was held at Leuven, Belgium, from Wednesday 11 to Saturday 14 September 2024.
- ★ At the age of 16, Anmol Kharb won the women's singles title at the National Badminton Championship 2023.

India Wins Men's Asian Hockey Champions Trophy

- ★ The Indian men's hockey team, led by Harmanpreet Singh, defeated host China 1-0 in the final to win the Men's Asian Hockey Champions Trophy for a record fifth time.
- ★ In the final, Jugraj Singh scored the only winning goal of the match in the 51 minutes.
- ★ The three-time Men's Asian Champions Trophy champion Pakistan defeated South Korea 5-2 in the 3rd place in the play-off match. South Korea was at the fourth place, Malaysia at 5th place and Japan at the last and 6th place.
 - Top scorer of the tournament: Yang Jihun of South Korea (nine goals)
 - Promising goalkeeper of the tournament: Kim Jaehan of South Korea's
 - Best goalkeeper of the tournament: Wang Caiyu of China
 - Rising star of the tournament: Shahid Hannan of Pakistan
 - Player of the tournament: Harmanpreet Singh, captain of India
 - Man of the final match: Lin Changliang of China

Glasgow to Host the 2026 Commonwealth Games

- ★ Glasgow, Scotland's capital, has agreed to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games after the original host, Victoria of Australia, declined due to the rising cost.
- ★ The Australian state of Victoria was awarded the hosting right of the 23rd Commonwealth Games in 2026.
- ★ The organiser of the Victorian Commonwealth Games even received the traditional torch as the next host of the games from the 2022 Birmingham Games organising committee at the closing ceremony of the 2022 Games.
- ★ After the Victorian government refusal to support the Commonwealth Games financially, Victoria refused to host them.

- ★ Glasgow agreed to host the games after it received backing from the Scottish government.
- ★ The 2026 Games will be a scaled-down version of the previous Commonwealth Games and will host only 10 sporting events, compared to the 17 sporting events of the 2022 Birmingham Games.

FIH Hockey Stars Awards

- ★ India's hockey captain Harmanpreet Singh and veteran goalkeeper PR Sreejesh have been shortlisted for the prestigious FIH Hockey Stars Awards following their outstanding performances at the Paris Olympics.
- ★ The nominations were announced by the International Hockey Federation (FIH).
- ★ Harmanpreet Singh is in the running for the FIH Player of the Year award after leading India to a bronze-medal finish in the Olympics.
- ★ He netted 10 goals, the highest by any player in the tournament.
- ★ PR Sreejesh has been nominated for the Goalkeeper of the Year award, following his stellar defensive display, particularly during the quarterfinal against Great Britain, where India advanced to the semifinals after a 4-2 penalty shootout win.

10th Indian Bowler to take 400 International Wickets

- ★ Indian fast bowling spearhead Jasprit Bumrah became the sixth Indian fast bowler and 10th overall to claim 400 wickets in international cricket matches (Test matches, One Day Internationals and T-20 Internationals combined).
- ★ Jasprit Bumrah achieved this milestone in the first test match against Bangladesh at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai.
- ★ India defeated Bangladesh by 280 runs in the match to go 1-0 up in the 2-Test match series.
- ★ Jasprit Bumrah, who has an awkward bowling action, debuted for India in a One Day International match against Australia in Sydney, Australia, on 23 January 2016.
- ★ He played his first test match against South Africa in Cape Town on January 5-8, 2018.
- ★ Jasprit Bumrah has played 196 international matches, including the first test match against Bangladesh.

Polish International Badminton Championships

- ★ Indian badminton prodigy Anmol Kharb won the women's singles title at the Polish International Badminton Championships.
- ★ The USD 3000 prize money 2024 Polish International Badminton Championship was held in Lublin, Poland, from 19-22 September 2024.
- ★ Anmol Kharb won her second senior title by beating Milena Schneider of Switzerland in the final of the Polish International Badminton Championship on 21 September 2024.
- ★ Anmol Kharb, ranked 165 in the world, defeated her higher-ranked opponent, Milena Schneider, ranked 141 in the world, in straight sets, 21-12, 21-8, in just 33 minutes.

45th FIDE Chess Olympiad

- ★ Indian Men's and Women's chess teams won gold medals in their respective events at the 45th edition of the FIDE Chess Olympiad, held in the Hungarian capital of Budapest from 10-23 September 2024.
- ★ The next 46th FIDE Chess Olympiad will be held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan 2026.
- ★ The Indian team retained the Gaprindashvili Cup, which is awarded to the best combined result in the Open and Women's sections.
- ★ The Indian team consisting of Arjun Erigasi, Rameshbabu Pragannandha, Dommaraju Gukesh, Vidit Gujrathi and Pentala Harikrishna won the gold medal in the Open section. The Indian men's team was awarded the gold medal and the Hamilton Russell Cup.
- ★ The Indian team topped the points table with 21 points, followed by the United States in second place and Uzbekistan in third place.
- ★ The Indian women's team of Vantika Agarwal, Divya Deshmukh, Harika Dranavali, Vaishali Rameshbabu and Tania Sachdev won the gold medal and the Vera Menchik Cup.
- ★ The Kazakhstan team was awarded the silver medal, while the USA team settled for the bronze medal.

First Pakistani Woman Nominated to ICC International Panel of Development Umpires

- ★ Saleema Imtiaz has made history by becoming the first Pakistani woman to be nominated to the ICC International Panel of Development Umpires, as announced by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB).
- ★ Saleema began her career with the PCB women's panel in 2008.
- ★ She officiated in the 2022 Asia Cup and the 2023 ACC Emerging Women's Cup in Hong Kong.
- ★ She has officiated in 22 T20Is, including 16 on-field and 6 as a TV umpire. Her most recent match as an on-field umpire was the Women's Asia Cup Final in Dambulla.
- ★ The International Cricket Council (ICC) is the global governing body for cricket, headquartered in Dubai, UAE, with 108 member nations (12 Full Members and 96 Associate Members).

2024 Hangzhou Open Tennis

- ★ The Indian pair of Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth won their first ATP title by winning the 2024 Hangzhou Open Tennis Championships doubles event.
- ★ The Hangzhou Open Tennis Championship was held in Hangzhou, China, from 18 to 24 September 2024. The \$1,000,630 prize Hangzhou Open is an ATP 250 event played on hardcourt.
- ★ Former US Open champion Marin Cilic of Croatia won the men's singles titles.
- ★ In the Hangzhou Open 2024 final, played on 24 September 2024, Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Vijay Sundar Prashanth defeated the German pair of Constantin Frantzen and Hendrik Jebens.
- ★ The final match, which lasted over one hour and 49 minutes, was finally decided in the super tie-breakers, and the Indian pair won by 4-6, 7(7)-6(5), and 10-7.

- ★ Marin Cilic defeated the local Chinese player Zhang Zhizhen 7-6(5), 7-6(5) to win his first ATP tour title since 2021.
- ★ It was the first ATP Tour final for the Chinese Zhang Zhizhen.
- ★ With the victory in the Hangzhou Open, 35-year-old Marin Cilic's world ranking improved to 212.

Pratyasa Ray Wins 32nd Ekalabya Puraskar 2024

- ★ Pratyasa Ray, an emerging swimming talent from Odisha, has been selected for the prestigious 32nd Ekalabya Puraskar 2024 for her outstanding achievements in swimming.
- ★ He won joint-best Swimmer in Women's Open category, winning 6 Gold medals at the 64th Odisha State Swimming Championship in 2024.
- ★ Pratyasa Ray will receive a cash prize of ₹7 lakh (up from the previous ₹5 lakh) along with a citation during the award ceremony.
- ★ Instituted by Indian Metals Public Charitable Trust (IMPACT) in 1993, this award is managed by IMFA, a leading ferro alloys producer in India.
- ★ The award is considered Odisha's most prestigious sports award and is given annually to young sportspersons for their achievements over the previous two years.
- ★ IMPACT aims to recognize and encourage excellence in sports while also contributing to the welfare of society.
- ★ The Ekalabya Puraskar encourages young athletes to compete at both national and international levels.

Junior World Weightlifting Championship

- ★ 17-year-old Dhanush Loganathan was the sole Indian to win a medal at the IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships 2024.
- ★ Dhanush Logabatahan won a bronze medal in the men's 55 kg event. He lifted 231kg (107 snatches + 124 kg clean and jerk) to win the bronze medal.
- ★ The IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships 2024, open to weightlifters under 21 years of age, was held in Leon, Spain, from September 19 to 27, 2024.
- ★ The Championships were organised by the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF).

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Nutrition Week

- ★ National Nutrition Week is observed annually in India from 1st to 7th September to highlight the importance of proper nutrition and its impact on a healthy lifestyle.
- ★ The week serves as a platform to raise awareness among individuals and communities about dietary habits and overall well-being.

- ★ National Nutrition Week was first initiated in March 1973 by the American Dietetic Association (now the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics) to promote nutrition education and the profession of dietitians.
- ★ Due to growing public interest, the week-long observance extended to a month-long celebration in the United States in 1980.
- ★ In 1982, India adopted the celebration of National Nutrition Week, launched by the Central Government to educate citizens about the importance of nutrition and to encourage the adoption of a healthy and sustainable lifestyle.

World Coconut Day

- ★ World Coconut Day is celebrated annually on September 2.
- ★ World Coconut Day aims to highlight the benefits of coconuts and promote awareness about their importance.
- ★ Major coconut-producing states in India include Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, West Bengal, and Andhra Pradesh.
- ★ Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC), established in 1969 and headquartered in Jakarta, Indonesia, supports the growth, production, sale, and export of coconuts in Asian countries.
- ★ In 2009, APCC initiated World Coconut Day to recognize and celebrate the fruit's significance.
- ★ APCC's member countries include India, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Kenya, and Vietnam.

National Teachers Day

- ★ In India, every year 5th of September is celebrated as National Teachers Day to contribute to our teachers.
- ★ The theme for Teacher's Day 2024 is "Empowering Educators for a Sustainable Future".
- ★ Fifth September is the birth anniversary of Dr. Sarevepalli Radhakrishnan, the former President of India who was a well-known Teacher, Scholar, and Philosopher.
- ★ In India, the President, Dr. Sarevepalli Radhakrishnan's birthday is celebrated as Teacher's Day. He was one of the greatest teachers and very popular among the students.
- ★ On his birthday his students and friends asked to celebrate it grandly. For that, he replied instead of celebrating in a grand manner he wanted to observe his birthday as a Teachers day.
- ★ Since 1962 every year 5th of September is celebrated as National Teachers Day in India.
- ★ As the common adage goes, the future of a country lies in the hands of its children, and teachers, as mentors, can mould students into future leaders who shape the destiny of India.

International Day of Charity

- ★ International Day of Charity is observed on September 5th to promote and encourage charitable activities around the globe.
- ★ In 2012, the United Nations General Assembly declared the International Day of Charity was observed on the 5th of September.
- ★ They declared September 5 as an International Day of Charity in order to remember the death anniversary of Mother Theresa who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1979.
- ★ This day was constructed by a Hungarian civil society with the support of the Hungarian government.
- ★ On 17 December 2012, the UN General Assembly declared the 5th of September as the International Day of Charity.
- ★ To celebrate this day every year, the work of different charities all over the world is published and encourages people to donate money and time to carry out charitable works.
- ★ To honour the tireless work of Mother Theresa for charity, her death anniversary is celebrated as the International Day of Charity.

World Literacy Day

- ★ Since 1967, World Literacy Day or International Literacy Day is observed each year on the 8th of September.
- ★ The theme for International Literacy Day 2024 is ‘Promoting multilingual education: Literacy for mutual understanding and peace’.
- ★ This day was declared by The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation or UNESCO on 26th October 1966.
- ★ International Literacy Day is observed in order to create awareness about literacy.
- ★ In 1966, UNESCO declared the 8th of September as World Literacy Day to remind the importance of literacy as a matter of dignity and human rights for people.
- ★ UNESCO encourages International Literacy Day in partnership with governments, local communities, charities, and experts in the field worldwide.
- ★ International Literacy Day was first coined in the “World Conference of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy” held in Tehran, Iran in 1965.

Hindi Diwas

- ★ Every year of 14th September is celebrated as a Hindi Diwas or Hindi day.
- ★ After India got its independence, in the year of 1949 there were a lot of discussions to make Hindi the official language of India.
- ★ Then it was decided that 14th September would be observed as Hindi Diwas or Hindi day.
- ★ In the year of 1953, the first Hindi Diwas was celebrated.

- ★ This decision is also stated in Article 343 of Chapter 17 of the Constitution of India.
- ★ It is written as “The national language of the Union will be Hindi and the script will be Devanagari” in the Constitution of India.
- ★ The reason for celebrating Hindi Day on September 14 is, that A Noble and Famous Hindi Literature Vyahar Rajendra Singha was born on 14th September.

World Ozone Day

- ★ 16th of September has been observed as World Ozone Day in India and International Day for the Preservation of Ozone worldwide.
- ★ World Ozone Day, or the International Day for the Preservation of Ozone, is celebrated every year to spread awareness among people about the depletion of the Ozone Layer, the danger it poses to the planet, and the countermeasures taken to preserve it.
- ★ In India, the Ozone Cell under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has been celebrating the International Day for the Preservation of Ozone at the National and State levels since 1995.
- ★ In 1994, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution establishing 16 September as International Day for the Preservation of Ozone.
- ★ The day was chosen to commemorate the signing of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer on 16 September 1987.
- ★ The first International Day for the Preservation of Ozone/World Ozone Day was observed on 16 September 1995.
- ★ The theme of the 30th World Ozone Day 2024 is “Montreal Protocol: Advancing Climate Actions.

World Patient Safety Day

- ★ Every year September 17 is observed as World Patient Safety Day.
- ★ The World Patient Safety Day Theme in 2024 is “Improving diagnosis for patient safety”, to recognize the crucial role patients, families, and caregivers play in health care safety.
- ★ In the year of 2019, the World Health Assembly established World Patient Safety Day with a resolution on patient safety at the international level.
- ★ The World Health Assembly adopted the resolution WHA 72.6 on “Global action on patient safety” which was built on a series of Annual Global Ministerial summits in 2016.
- ★ Though this day was established in 2019, this day was first observed in the year 2021.

World Bamboo Day

- ★ Every year 18th of September is celebrated as World Bamboo Day.
- ★ World Bamboo Organization recognized World Bamboo Day in the year of 2009.
- ★ World Bamboo Day was founded by Kamesh Salam, the former President of the World Bamboo Organization.
- ★ The World Bamboo Organization Headquarters was located in Antwerp, Belgium.

- ★ The 8th World Bamboo Congress was held in Bangkok on 18 September 2009.
- ★ So on this day, the World Bamboo Organization declared that every year the 18th of September is observed as World Bamboo Day.
- ★ The World Bamboo Congress organized this day in order to achieve the protection of natural resources and to promote new cultivation of Bamboo for new industries in regions around the world.

World Alzheimers Day

- ★ Every year World Alzheimers Day is observed on 21st September.
- ★ The theme for World Alzheimer’s Day 2024 is “Time to act on dementia, Time to act on Alzheimer’s”.
- ★ Alzheimer’s disease was first diagnosed in an old German lady in 1901 by Alois Alzheimer, a German Psychiatrist. This illness was named after the German Psychiatrist.
- ★ When Alzheimer’s Disease International celebrated its 10th anniversary in 1994, the Association declared that World Alzheimer’s Day was observed on the 21st September of every year.
- ★ Alzheimer’s disease is the 6th leading cause of death and in all over the world the 7th deadliest disease.
- ★ The early symptom of the disease is an inability to recall the events or discussions or our daily activities. It may affect physical health too.

International Day of Peace

- ★ International Day of Peace is celebrated on 21st September of every year.
- ★ The International Day of Peace 2024 Theme is “Cultivating a Culture of Peace”.
- ★ The United Nations General Assembly declared the International Day of Peace in order to strengthen the ideas of peace.
- ★ In the beginning, the date chosen was the opening day of the annual sessions of the General Assembly (the third Tuesday of September) but later it was declared that the 21st September is observed as International Day of Peace.
- ★ In 1983, the office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Pathways to Peace (PTP) submitted a “We the Peoples” initiative Annual Report to the UN, summarising the Peace Day activities.
- ★ For its initiative, the International Year of Peace in 1987, PTP was granted “Peace Messenger”. In 2006, the name was changed from “We the Peoples” initiative to “Culture of Peace Initiative”.

International Day of Sign Languages

- ★ The International Day of Sign Languages is celebrated annually on September 23 to promote awareness of sign languages and the rights of deaf individuals.
- ★ This year’s theme is “Sign up for Sign Language Rights”.

- ★ Sign language is a vital nonverbal communication method, primarily used by individuals who are hard of hearing.
- ★ It allows deaf people to communicate effectively with each other and their surroundings.
- ★ The UN General Assembly established this day as part of the International Week of the Deaf to highlight the importance of sign languages and the rights of deaf individuals.
- ★ The first celebration took place in 2018, marking a significant step towards recognizing the linguistic rights of deaf people.

World Pharmacists Day

- ★ Every year we observe 25th September as World Pharmacists Day.
- ★ This year, the theme of World Pharmacy Day is “Pharmacists: Meeting Global Health Needs”.
- ★ In 2009, at Turkey’s Istanbul, The International Pharmaceutical Federation Council announced that World Pharmacists Day would be celebrated on 25th September.
- ★ In the year of 1912, the International Pharmaceutical Federation was established on September 25.
- ★ So the Turkish members council put forward the 25th of September as World Pharmacists Day.
- ★ The International Pharmaceutical Federation is the global federation of national associations of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists.

World Maritime Day

- ★ On the last Thursday of September, World Maritime Day is observed worldwide by seafaring communities.
- ★ In 2024, World Maritime Day will be observed on 26 September 2024.
- ★ The day focuses on the importance of shipping lane safety, maritime security, and the marine environment, emphasising a particular aspect of the International Maritime Organisation’s work.
- ★ In India, the National Maritime Day is observed on 5th of April.
- ★ The National Maritime Day was first observed on 5 April 1964 to spread awareness and recognise the efforts and contribution of India’s maritime sector in enhancing the country’s economic growth and development.
- ★ The 2024 National Maritime Day theme was Navigating the Future: Safety First.
- ★ The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) organised the first World Maritime Day in 1978 to mark the 20th anniversary of the IMO Convention’s entry into force.

World Tourism Day

- ★ 27th of September has been observed as World Tourism Day worldwide.
- ★ The day underscores the role of tourism in a country’s economic development and the role it plays in promoting people-to-people contact across cultures.

- ★ The Union Ministry of Tourism will celebrate the 2024 World Tourism in New Delhi on 27 September 2024. Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankar was the Chief Guest at the function.
- ★ The United Nations World Tourism Organisation was established in 1975 and changed its name to UN Tourism in January 2024.
- ★ Every year, UN Tourism chooses a theme for World Tourism Day. This year's theme is "Tourism and Peace".
- ★ The theme highlights tourism's contribution to promoting peace in the world by promoting understanding between people of different cultures. It helps break down stereotypes and prejudices about other people.
- ★ Tourism can help bring together different nations and cultures and support reconciliation processes among nations.
- ★ The first World Tourism Day was observed on 27 September 1980.

World Rabies Day

- ★ World Rabies Day is celebrated on 28th September of every year.
- ★ This year's World Rabies Day theme is: "Breaking Rabies Boundaries"
- ★ The Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC) established World Rabies Day in 2007.
- ★ This day was recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO).
- ★ They chose the date 28th September to observe World Rabies Day in order to remember the French Scientist Louis Pasteur.
- ★ In 1895, the French Scientist Louis Pasteur passed away on this day (28th September) created the vaccination for rabies
- ★ World Rabies Day is observed in order to raise awareness about the impact of rabies on animals and humans.

