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BANKING NEWS

SBI recognised as 'Best Bank in India' for 2024

State Bank of India (SBI) was named the Best Bank in India for 2024 by Global Finance Magazine at its 31st Annual Best Bank Awards in Washington, held alongside the IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings. SBI Chairman CS Setty accepted the award, honoring the bank's dedication to exceptional service and financial inclusion.

Foot notes:

- **Commitment to Excellence:** The award highlights SBI's dedication to exceptional services and financial inclusion.
- **Global Financial Standards:** Global Finance's awards are a trusted benchmark for evaluating top banks worldwide.
- **Trusted Standard:** For decades, Global Finance's Best Bank Awards have set the benchmark for evaluating top financial institutions.
- **Corporate Value:** The awards provide crucial insights for corporate decision-makers, especially amid global economic challenges.
- **Global Reach:** They recognize leading banks across Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Caribbean, and other regions, covering nearly 150 countries and eight U.S. regions.

About SBI:

CEO: Challa Sreenivasulu Setty

Founded: 1955

Headquarters: Mumbai

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das Awarded Top Global Banker

Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das has been recognized as the top central banker by US-based Global Finance magazine for the second consecutive year. He received an A+ grade in the Central Bank Report Cards 2024. The award was presented at an event in Washington, D.C. Das was ranked first among three central bank governors rated A+.

Foot notes:

- **Grading Scale:** Grades are assigned from A to F, evaluating central bankers on inflation control, economic growth, currency stability, and interest rate management.
- **Award Criteria:** Global Finance's annual Central Banker Report Cards recognize bank leaders whose strategies excel through originality, creativity, and tenacity.
- **Performance Focus:** The awards highlight the effectiveness of central bank governors compared to their peers in achieving economic goals.

About RBI:

Founded: 1935

Headquarters: Mumbai

Solex Energy Partners with SBI for Solar Project Financing

Solex Energy has teamed up with the State Bank of India (SBI) to offer financing options for solar projects, targeting commercial, industrial, and institutional clients. Through this partnership, SBI will provide loans up to 10 crore under its Surya Shakti Solar Finance Scheme, aimed at making solar energy more accessible and affordable across India. Solex Energy will assist clients with site evaluations, project design, and regulatory approvals, while SBI will streamline the loan application process via a digital platform. This collaboration reflects a broader trend, similar to Tata Power Solar's recent partnership with ICICI Bank to finance solar units for diverse customers.

Foot notes:

- **Accessibility:** The partnership aims to make solar energy more affordable for a broader audience.
- **Business Expansion:** The initiative intends to boost the adoption of solar solutions among clients and channel partners.
- **Manufacturing Capacity:** Solex Energy is increasing its solar module manufacturing capacity from 700 megawatts (MW) to 1.5 gigawatts (GW) in Tadkeshwar, Gujarat, to meet rising demand for solar solutions.
- **Customer Support:** Solex Energy will provide comprehensive support from site evaluation and design to obtaining regulatory approvals.
- **SBI's Role:** State Bank of India (SBI) will offer a digital platform to simplify the loan application process for financing solar projects.
- **Financing Options:** Various public and private lenders are collaborating with solar companies to provide financing for both commercial and residential solar projects.
- **Recent Collaboration:** In August, Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd (TPSSL) partnered with ICICI Bank to offer financing for solar units to residential and corporate customers.

SPORTS NEWS

Akanksha Salunkhe wins PSA Title in France

Indian squash player Akanksha Salunkhe made headlines on Sunday by clinching the prestigious 2eme Open International Feminin de Couzeix/Limoges 2024 PSA Challenger title in France. Ranked 74th in the world, Salunkhe displayed remarkable skill and determination throughout the tournament, culminating in a commanding win in the final.

Foot notes:

- **Final Matchup:** Salunkhe, seeded sixth, faced Malaysia's Yasshmita Jadish Kumar (ranked 87th) in the final.
- **Decisive Victory:** She won the match in straight sets, clinching it 3-0 with scores of 11-7, 11-7, and 11-6. This victory marks her first PSA World Tour squash title of the year.
- **Path to the Final:** Salunkhe received a bye in the first round and then defeated local player Lauren Baltayan 3-0 (11-9, 11-4, 14-12) in the second round.

- **Intense Quarterfinals:** In the quarterfinals, Salunkhe faced Briton Kiera Marshall, winning a hard-fought match 3-2 (11-5, 11-4, 9-11, 7-11, 11-7).
- **Semifinal Challenge:** She then faced fifth seed Menna Walid of Egypt in the semifinals, overcoming a tough opening game to win 3-0 (15-13, 11-9, 11-6), after Walid had eliminated Salunkhe's compatriot Tanvi Khanna in the quarterfinals.

India's Abhishek clinched Bronze medal at U-23 Wrestling World Championship 2024

India's Abhishek has won the bronze medal in the Men's 61 kg Freestyle category at the Under 23 Wrestling World Championship 2024 held in Tirana, Albania. He secured the medal by defeating Mykyta Abramov of Ukraine with a score of 3-0. Bashir Magomedov claimed the gold medal, while Ruslan Asif Abdullayev of Azerbaijan took home the silver. Ebrahim Mahdi Khari also earned a bronze medal alongside Abhishek.

Foot notes:

- **Historic Achievement:** At 18, Chirag is the third Indian to make it to the finals in this weight class, following Ravi Dahiya and Aman Sehrawat.
- **Final Matchup:** He will compete against Abdymalik Karachov of Kyrgyzstan in the final tonight.
- **Bronze Medal Matches:** Sujeet (70 kg) and Vicky (97 kg) are set to participate in bronze medal matches today.
- **Semi-Final Results:** Sujeet lost to Magomedov Bashir Khaniev of Azerbaijan 4-8, while Vicky fell to Mahdi Moharamali Hajiloueian Morafah 8-12 in their respective semi-finals last night.

Sukant Kadam Bags Gold And Silver At Japan Para Badminton International

At the Japan Para Badminton International 2024, India's star shuttler Sukant Kadam clinched gold in men's singles and secured a silver in men's doubles with partner Dinesh Rajaiah. In the singles final, Sukant delivered a strong 21-12, 21-10 victory over fellow Indian shuttler Tarun. In the doubles, Sukant and Dinesh faced India's Umesh Vikram Kumar and Surya Kant Yadav in a tight match, narrowly missing gold with a score of 21-5, 20-22, 21-16.

Foot notes:

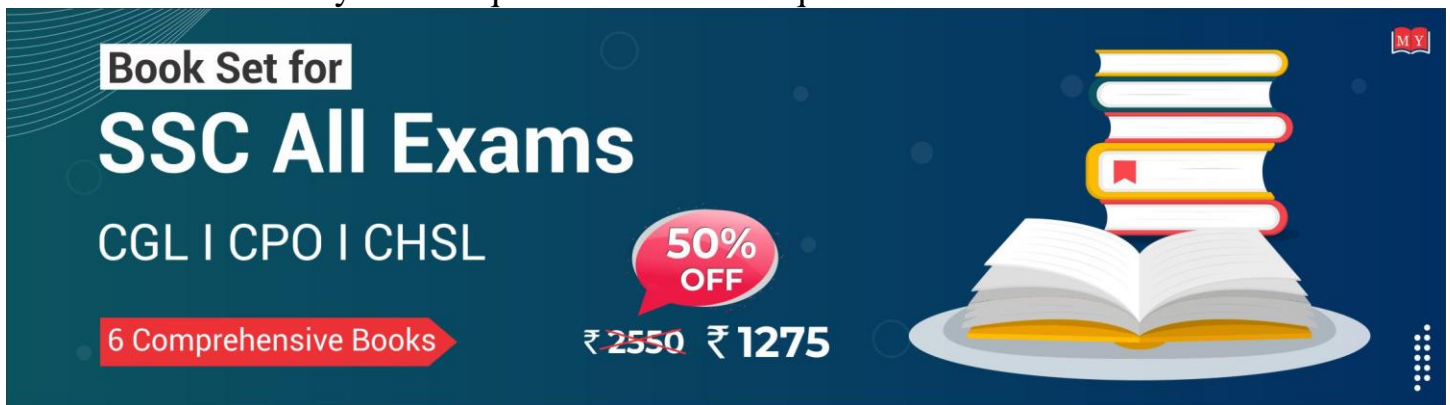
- Sukant Kadam and Dinesh Rajaiah showcased resilience against Umesh Vikram Kumar and Surya Kant Yadav, battling back to win the second set 22-20 before taking silver with a final score of 5-21, 22-20, 16-21.
- Manisha Ramdass clinched gold by defeating Japan's Mamiko Toyoda 21-12, 21-18.
- Neeraj earned silver in the SL3 category, finishing as runner-up to Coraline Bergeron.

India Wins Bronze in Sultan of Johor Cup Junior Hockey

India secured the bronze medal at the Sultan of Johor Cup in Malaysia with a thrilling 3-2 shootout win against New Zealand, following a 2-2 tie in regular play. Goalkeeper Bikramjit Singh played a pivotal role with three crucial saves in the shootout, while Gurjot Singh, Manmeet Singh and Sourabh Anand Kushwaha scored to seal the victory.

Foot notes:

- In the 57th minute, Jonty Elmes, who had previously scored a hat-trick against India, equalized, pushing the match into a shootout.
- India clinched the bronze medal at the Sultan of Johor Cup junior men's hockey tournament in Malaysia, defeating New Zealand 3-2 in a thrilling shootout.
- The match ended in a 2-2 draw in regulation time.
- Indian goalkeeper Bikramjit Singh made three crucial saves during the shootout.
- Gurjot Singh, Manmeet Singh, and Sourabh Anand Kushwaha scored for India in the shootout.
- Dilraj Singh and Manmeet Singh initially put India ahead, but New Zealand's Owen Brown and Jonty Elmes equalized in the final quarter.




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Pro Kabaddi League Wins 'Best Sports League of the Year'

At the CII Sports Business Awards 2024, held during the launch of its 11th season in New Delhi, the Pro Kabaddi League was honored as the 'Best Sports League of the Year.' League Commissioner Anupam Goswami led the event, where defending champions Puneri Paltan also received the 'Sports Franchise of the Year' award for their grassroots program, Yuva Paltan, which supports the development of young kabaddi talent.

Foot notes:

- The CII Sports Business Awards recognize excellence and innovation in the sports business sector.
- The Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) won in this competitive category, highlighting its influence on Indian sports and kabaddi's growth.
- League Commissioner Anupam Goswami expressed gratitude, calling the award a testament to the dedication behind PKL's success since 2014.
- Goswami stated PKL is committed to further popularizing kabaddi and supporting India's vision of becoming a global sporting powerhouse.
- The award coincides with India's progress in sports initiatives, such as the draft National Sports Policy 2024, aligning PKL's success with the nation's goals for a vibrant sports ecosystem and kabaddi's elevation to an Olympic sport.

Indian Duo Wins Women's Doubles at WTT Feeder Cagliari 2024

India's Yashaswini Ghoshal and Kritika Roy claimed the women's doubles title at the WTT Feeder Cagliari 2024 table tennis tournament in Italy. The Indian pair triumphed over South Korea's Yoo Siwoo and Kim Haeun with a 3-1 victory in the final. They secured their spot in the title match after defeating German fourth seeds Sophia Klee and Franziska Schreiner, also by a score of 3-1.

Foot notes:

- Indian table tennis players, seeded second, advanced to the title match. Defeated Italy's Arianna Barani and Maria Picu 3-0 in the first round. Overcame Japan's Sachi Aoki and Sakura Yokoi 3-0 in the quarter-finals.
- Secured a 3-1 win over German fourth seeds Sophia Klee and Franziska Schreiner in the semi-finals.
- Ghoshal reached the mixed doubles semi-finals with Harmeet Desai but lost 3-0 to Italy's John Oyebo and Gaia Monfardini, who went on to win the title.
- In women's singles, Ghoshal's journey ended in the round of 16 after a loss to South Korea's Lee Daeun, following her win over Kritika in the second round.
- Harmeet Desai reached the men's singles quarter-finals before an unexpected loss to Malta's Amirreza Abbasi, a qualifier.

Manika Batra Makes History in WTT Champions Event

Manika Batra made history as the first Indian table tennis player to reach the top eight at the WTT Champions Montpellier 2024 in France. Although she was defeated 3-0 by China's Qian Tianyi in the quarter-finals, Batra, ranked 30th globally, advanced to this stage with a 3-1 win over world No. 14 Bernadette Szocs from Romania and a victory against Lily Zhang of the USA.

Foot notes:

- Manika Batra's impressive WTT Champions run in Montpellier ended with a quarterfinal loss to China's Qian Tianyi (8-11, 8-11, 10-12).
- Ranked World No. 30, Batra became the first Indian to reach the quarterfinals of a WTT Champions event, featuring the top 32 global players.
- She defeated USA's Lily Zhang (3-0) and stunned World No. 14 Bernadette Szocs (3-1), securing her quarterfinal spot.
- Batra's victory over Szocs was her second, following her win in India's 3-2 victory against Romania at the Paris Olympics.
- India's top-ranked player, Sreeja Akula (World No. 25), lost in the first round to Puerto Rico's Adriana Diaz in a close 3-2 match.
- No Indian men participated in the singles events, concluding India's campaign in Montpellier.
- Batra's success sets a benchmark for Indian table tennis, highlighting her achievement in this prestigious event introduced in 2022.

Smriti Mandhana become 1st female Indian cricketer to register 8 centuries in ODI

Smriti Mandhana has established a new record in Indian women's cricket by scoring the most centuries in Women's ODIs, surpassing Mithali Raj's previous record of seven. She reached her eighth ODI century with a solid 100 off 122 balls against New Zealand in Ahmedabad. India successfully chased down New Zealand's target of 233, winning by 6 wickets with 34 balls remaining. Notably, Mandhana had not scored an international century in India until this year; however, she has since recorded two centuries against South Africa and added a third on home soil with her latest performance.

Foot notes:

- Smriti Mandhana's journey in 2024 has been remarkable, culminating in her record for most centuries in Women's ODIs.
- During the series against South Africa, she made headlines by scoring back-to-back centuries.
- Her first century was a stellar 117 in the first ODI, demonstrating her ability to anchor the innings and dominate bowlers.
- She followed this with a phenomenal 136 in the second ODI, becoming the first Indian woman to hit consecutive centuries in ODI history.
- In this impressive run, she equaled Mithali Raj's previous record of seven centuries and became the fastest Indian woman to reach 3,000 runs in ODIs, further solidifying her legacy in the sport.

Gary Kirsten Resigns as Head Coach of Pakistan's White-Ball Teams

Gary Kirsten has resigned as head coach of Pakistan's ODI and T20I teams effective immediately, just six months after his two-year appointment by the PCB in April 2024 and only a week before Pakistan's ODI series in Australia. The PCB has announced that Test coach Jason Gillespie will step in to lead the team for the six white-ball games on the Australian tour.

Foot notes:

- Kirsten's first major tournament as coach was the T20 World Cup in the USA, where Pakistan had a rough start.
- Pakistan faced early exits after losses to the USA and India, marking their earliest elimination from a T20 World Cup.
- Babar Azam stepped down as white-ball captain for the second time a few months later.
- Despite these setbacks, Kirsten was expected to be given time to build the team, especially with the ICC Champions Trophy set to take place in Pakistan in early 2025, the country's first ICC event in nearly 30 years.

Mansi Ahlawat Wins Bronze in 59kg at U23 World Championships

At the U23 World Championships in Tirana, Albania, Indian wrestler Mansi Ahlawat clinched a bronze medal in the women's 59kg category. Meanwhile, Manisha Bhanwala missed out in the 65kg category. Mansi secured a 4-0 win over U23 World Champion Solomiia Vynnyk in the quarterfinal. Earlier, she defeated former World Champion Jacarra Winchester 2-1 in the first round and Tekin Eda of Turkey 3-0 in the Round of 16.

Foot notes:

- Sanjeev lost 0-9 to Romania's Mihai in the 55kg quarterfinal after defeating Koontz (USA) 5-3 in the Round of 16.
- In the qualification round, both Chetan (63kg) and Ankit Gulia (72kg) exited early, with Chetan losing 0-9 to Michal Tracz (Poland) and Ankit to Michael Felix Wimayer.
- No other Indian wrestlers advanced past the qualification round.
- India sent a 12-member team to the Wrestling Championships, approved by Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya after the WFI's suspension by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

Kagiso Rabada Takes No.1 Spot in ICC Men's Test Bowler Rankings

South Africa's Kagiso Rabada has overtaken India's Jasprit Bumrah to become the No. 1 Test bowler in the latest ICC Rankings. Bumrah, who went wicketless in India's loss to New Zealand in Pune, has dropped to 3rd, while Australia's Josh Hazlewood now ranks 2nd. Rabada surpassed Bumrah, R Ashwin, and Hazlewood after an impressive nine-wicket haul in South Africa's first Test against Bangladesh. Rabada claimed three wickets in Bangladesh's first innings, reaching 300 Test wickets faster than any other player, and followed up with figures of 6 for 46, leading South Africa to their first Test win in Asia since 2014.

Foot notes:

- Bumrah and Ashwin slipped to 3rd and 4th in the latest rankings after subpar performances in India's loss to New Zealand in Pune, both falling below Hazlewood.
- Pakistan's Noman Ali rose nine places to 8th in the Test bowling rankings after taking nine wickets in Rawalpindi, marking his debut in the top ten.
- Rachin Ravindra and Saud Shakeel entered the top ten Test batting rankings for the first time, with Ravindra at 10th and Shakeel climbing to 7th.
- Yashasvi Jaiswal reclaimed 3rd place in the batting rankings, overtaking Harry Brook, after scores of 30 and 77 in Pune.
- Mehidy Hasan Miraz moved up to 3rd in the all-rounder rankings following his 97 and two wickets in Mirpur.

Emirati rider wins gold at Asian Equestrian Federation cup

Emirati rider Lana Majed claimed first place in the junior category of the Asian Equestrian Federation (AEF) Cup for show jumping, held for riders aged 14-17. The competition, which concluded yesterday on Jeju Island, South Korea, brought together 18 riders from 18 countries.

Foot notes:

- Emirati rider Lana Majed won gold in the junior category of the Asian Equestrian Federation (AEF) Cup for show jumping.
- The competition took place on Jeju Island, South Korea, concluding yesterday.
- Lana competed against 18 riders from 18 countries in the 14-17 age category.
- She achieved a winning time of 26.03 seconds, navigating obstacles set at 110 cm.
- Lana's victory highlights her exceptional skill and dedication in equestrian sports.

Atanu Das Wins Bronze in Swiss Open Indoor Archery

India's Atanu Das won the bronze medal at the Swiss Open Indoor Archery, defeating Switzerland's Thomas Rufer 6-4 in the Recurve Men's Bronze match. In the semifinals, Das lost to France's Romain Fichet, who claimed the silver medal, while Italy's Alessandro Paoli took home the gold. The 2025 season will feature six events, beginning in November 2024 and concluding in March 2025.

Foot notes:

- Atanu Das won the bronze medal in the men's recurve category at the first stage of the Indoor Archery World Series 2025 in Lausanne, Switzerland.
- This marked his first international event since the 2023 Asian Games.
- Despite a long break, Atanu showed no rust and scored an impressive 582 out of 60 shots in the 18m indoor archery event.
- This bronze was his first indoor archery medal in seven years, with his last being a win at the 2017 Las Vegas Indoor Archery World Cup Stage 4.
- Atanu excelled in the elimination rounds, shooting ten perfect 30s out of 14 sets to reach the semifinals.
- Deepika Kumari, the only Indian in the women's recurve category, lost her quarterfinal match to Slovakia's Denisa Barankova, who went on to win the championship.
- Atanu had earlier finished 11th in the qualifiers and defeated Canada's Alexandre Desemery (7-1) and the USA's Nicholas D'Amour (6-4) in the initial rounds.
- Aditya Wadhwa did not advance past the opening round in the men's recurve competition.

Bangladesh retained their SAFF Women's Championship title

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli presented the championship trophy and medals, joined by Deputy PM Prakashman Singh and Youth and Sports Minister Tejulal Chaudhary. Bangladesh won the SAFF title for the second consecutive time. First title win was in 2022, also against Nepal. Bangladesh Advanced with a decisive 7-1 win against Bhutan in the semi-final. Nepal has become the runner-up in the SAFF Championship.

Foot notes:

- Monika Chakma scored in the 52nd minute to give Bangladesh a 1-0 lead.
- Nepal's Amisha Karki equalized in the 56th minute with a precise shot assisted by Preeti Rai.
- Ritu Porna Chakma scored the winning goal in the 81st minute with a sharp-angled shot, securing a 2-1 victory for Bangladesh.
- Best Goalkeeper: Rupna Chakma (won for the second consecutive time).
- Bangladesh remained dominant, highlighted by a 7-1 semi-final win over Bhutan, echoing their 8-0 victory over Bhutan in the 2022 championship.

Ravindra Jadeja Climbs to 5th Spot in India's Test Wicket List

Ravindra Jadeja reached an important milestone as the fifth-highest wicket-taker for India in Test cricket. He achieved this on the first day of the third Test match against New Zealand in Mumbai, surpassing Ishant Sharma's 311 wickets from 188 innings to claim the position.

Foot notes:

- He is notable for his dual role as an all-rounder, excelling with both ball and bat.
- His consistent performance highlights his importance to the team.
- He is known for breaking partnerships and containing runs.
- He always combines effective bowling with exceptional fielding and batting capabilities.



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APPOINTMENT & PERSON IN NEWS

Vipin Kumar Appointed as Chairman of Airports Authority of India

Vipin Kumar, a 1996-batch IAS officer from the Bihar cadre, has been appointed as the new Chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI). Prior to this, he served as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Education, where he played a key role in implementing major initiatives like the Samagra Shiksha Scheme and the National Education Policy-2020. AAI currently oversees the management of 133 airports across India.

Foot notes:

- Vipin Kumar, now Chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI), previously held roles as Chairman of the Bihar Bridge Construction Corporation, MD of Bihar Milk Cooperative Federation (SUDHA), and Director of the Mid-Day Scheme in Bihar. He has a background in Electronics & Communication Engineering.
- In his new position, Kumar will focus on AAI's goals of developing world-class airport infrastructure, enhancing air navigation services, and providing top-notch passenger amenities across India.
- His leadership aligns with the Prime Minister's vision for "Viksit Bharat-2047" and will drive advancements in the Indian aviation sector.
- AAI manages air navigation services over 2.8 million square nautical miles and recorded significant achievements in FY 2023-24.

Deepak Agarwal Appointed as MD of NAFED

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) recently appointed Deepak Agarwal, a 2000-batch IAS officer from the Uttar Pradesh cadre, as the new Managing Director of the National Agriculture Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED). His five-year tenure promises stable leadership focused on boosting the efficiency and impact of NAFED, a crucial organization in India's agricultural sector.

Foot notes:

- It is an apex organization under the Ministry of Agriculture which deals with marketing co-operative societies for agricultural produce in India.
- It is one of the largest procurer and marketing agency of agricultural produce in India. To promote co-operative marketing of agricultural produce to benefit farmers, to organise, promote and develop the marketing, processing and storage of agricultural, horticultural and forest produce, to distribute agricultural machinery, implements and other inputs, to provide technical advice and assistance in agriculture, production, promotion and functioning of its members, partners, associates and co-operative marketing, processing and supply societies in India

About NAFED:

Established – 2 October 1958

Headquarters – Delhi

Regional Offices – Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata

VVS Laxman Appointed as Head Coach for India's Tour of South Africa

VVS Laxman has been appointed as Head Coach for India's Senior Men's Cricket Team for the upcoming South Africa tour, where India will play a four-match T20 series from November 8 to 15. Suryakumar Yadav (Captain), Abhishek, Sanju Samson (wk), Rinku Singh, Tilak Varma, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Ramandeep Singh, Varun Chakaravathy, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Vijaykumar Vyshak, Avesh Khan, Yash Dayal.

Foot notes:

- VVS Laxman will be joined by NCA staff members Sairaj Bahutule, Hrishikesh Kanitkar, and Subhadeep Ghosh as the coaching team.
- The trio recently coached India in the Asia Emerging Cup in Oman.
- The T20I series will take place in Durban, Gqeberha, Centurion, and Johannesburg on November 8, 10, 13, and 15.
- Originally not part of the international schedule, the series was arranged between the BCCI and CSA, prompting former captain Sunil Gavaskar to question its timing during India's domestic season.

Bharti Airtel Named New CEO Shashwat Sharma

In a notable restructuring, Bharti Airtel has appointed Shashwat Sharma as the new Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), effective January 1, 2026. This change is part of a structured succession plan, enabling the current MD and CEO, Gopal Vittal, to become Executive Vice Chairman. This transition follows Vittal's 12-year tenure, during which Airtel

grew its revenue market share from 30% to 40% and increased its market capitalization fivefold.

Foot notes:

- **Shashwat Sharma's Role:** He will become CEO after a 14-month period as CEO designate, overseeing the entire consumer business, including mobility, home, and DTH services.
- **Gopal Vittal's Focus:** Vittal will mentor Sharma while continuing to manage enterprise and human resources.
- **Restructuring Goals:** Airtel aims to boost operational efficiency and competitiveness, with key changes including separating DTH services from the entertainment category and creating a standalone Customer Experience function.
- **Leadership Appointments:** Siddharth Sharma is appointed Director of Marketing and CEO of Connected Homes, while Pushpinder Gujral becomes CEO and Director of DTH.
- **Financial Performance:** Bharti Airtel reported a 168% increase in consolidated net profit for the July-September quarter, reaching ₹3,593 crore, following its first tariff hike in over two years.
- **Chairman's Praise:** Chairman Sunil Bharti Mittal commended the company's commitment to structured succession planning and the empowerment of management to achieve superior results.

FSIB selected Ashok Chandra as MD and CEO of PNB

The Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) has proposed Ashok Chandra as the next Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Punjab National Bank (PNB). Currently an Executive Director at Canara Bank since November 2022, Chandra began his banking career in September 1991 with Corporation Bank. He holds a Master's degree in Economics and is a Certified Associate of the Indian Institute of Bankers. He will succeed Atul Kumar Goel, whose term concludes on December 31, 2024.

Foot notes:

- **Application Process:** The FSIB issued a notification on August 1, 2024, inviting applications for the MD & CEO position at PNB, with a deadline of August 29. After interviewing 16 candidates on October 26 and 28, they recommended Ashok Chandra based on his performance and experience.
- **Chandra's Experience:** He has held significant roles, including leading the recovery and stressed assets management vertical at Union Bank of India since becoming General Manager in 2018. His extensive background covers diverse banking demographics, from rural to urban settings.
- **FSIB Role:** The FSIB is an autonomous body that recommends candidates for high-level appointments in public sector banks.
- **Next Steps:** Following the FSIB's recommendation, the Department of Financial Services (DFS) will forward Chandra's name to the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) for final approval.

- **Position Details:** The tenure for the MD & CEO role at PNB is three years, with possible extensions based on performance, and the salary scale ranges from 205,400 to 224,400, plus allowances.

Keshav Chandra appointed as NDMC Chairman

A 1995-batch IAS officer has been appointed as the new chairman of the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC). Since June, NDMC had been without a full-time chairman following the transfer of Amit Yadav to the Union government as Secretary in the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment. Initially, the Centre assigned the additional responsibility to then-Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar. After his retirement in August, MCD Commissioner Ashwani Kumar was appointed as the link officer to oversee NDMC's daily operations.

Foot notes:

- Chandra, currently Chief Secretary of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, has been appointed to the key post, succeeding former Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar.
- Previously, Chandra held significant roles including positions at the Delhi Jal Board and as Environment Secretary.
- The position became vacant after Naresh Kumar's term ended in August, with MCD Commissioner Ashwani Kumar serving as link officer in the interim.
- The NDMC council includes official, non-official, and elected members, nominated by the Ministry of Home Affairs for five-year terms.
- Elected council members include New Delhi MP Bansuri Swaraj, New Delhi MLA Arvind Kejriwal, and Delhi Cantonment MLA Virendra Singh Kadian.

About NDMC:

Founded: 1911

Headquarter: New Delhi

Sumathi Dharmawardena appointed as ICC Anti-Corruption Unit Chairman

The ICC has appointed Sumathi Dharmawardena from Sri Lanka as the new independent chair of its Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU). Dharmawardena will begin his role on November 1, 2024, overseeing and leading the ACU, which is managed at the executive level by the General Manager - Integrity. He has previously served as the additional solicitor general in Sri Lanka's Attorney General's Department, representing the government and its sports ministry in various legal matters.

Foot notes:

- As the ACU's Independent Chair, Dharmawardena will oversee the unit responsible for maintaining cricket's integrity, guiding the General Manager – Integrity in daily operations.
- His role involves implementing effective strategies to prevent corruption in international cricket.
- Dharmawardena has a notable career as the Additional Solicitor General at Sri Lanka's Attorney General's Department, handling various sports-related legal matters for the government.

- His experience with Interpol and the UNODC enhances his expertise in managing high-profile investigations and prosecutions under the Prevention of Offences relating to the Sports Act, equipping him to combat sports corruption.
- With the conclusion of tenures for both Flanagan and ACU head Alex Marshall, Dharmawardena's leadership signifies a pivotal shift in the ICC's anti-corruption strategy, reinforcing its commitment to maintaining integrity in global cricket.

About ICC:**Founded:** 1909**Headquarters:** Dubai, UAE**CEO:** Geoff Allardice**Green Hydrogen Systems appointed Rene Umlauf as CEO**

The Board of Directors of Green Hydrogen Systems has appointed René Umlauf as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), effective November 1, 2024. He will succeed Peter Friis, who is departing the company. René Umlauf, who holds a Ph.D. in engineering, previously served as Managing Director and CSO at Rittal, as well as CEO at MAN Diesel and Siemens Renewable Energy, bringing extensive experience in business transformation and restructuring.

Foot notes:

- Green Hydrogen Systems is a clean tech company specializing in standardized, modular electrolyzers for producing green hydrogen exclusively from renewable energy sources.
- Green hydrogen, with its broad applications, is crucial to the energy transition towards a net-zero emissions society by 2050.
- Rising demand for green hydrogen necessitates a significant increase in electrolysis capacity.
- Founded in 2007, the company has over 15 years of experience in technology development, offering a commercially proven, cost-effective electrolysis solution endorsed by top green energy companies.

Dr. Jacqueline d'Arros Hughes Appointed as Secretary General of World Agriculture**Forum**

Dr. Jacqueline d'Arros Hughes, the outgoing Director General of ICRISAT, will assume the role of Secretary General of the World Agriculture Forum (WAF) in mid-November 2024. Renowned for her commitment to sustainable agriculture and food security, Dr. Hughes brings extensive expertise to WAF, a key platform for advancing global agricultural development.

Foot notes:

- She is a renowned plant virologist focused on modern agricultural research.
- Promotes the use of remote sensing and digital tools for crop resilience.
- Emphasizes gender equity, recognizing women's key role in agriculture.
- Aims to drive collaboration and alliances for innovative agricultural solutions.
- Positions WAF as a platform for local-global impact, fostering relevant policies.
- Focus on supporting smallholder farmers, agribusinesses, and rural communities.

- Committed to inclusive growth, climate resilience, and collaborative action to benefit the agricultural sector.

IAS Rajesh Kumar Singh Appointed as Defence Secretary

Rajesh Kumar Singh, a 1989-batch IAS officer from the Kerala cadre, has been appointed as India's Defence Secretary. He succeeds Giridhar Aramane, a 1988-batch IAS officer from the Andhra Pradesh cadre, who retired yesterday. Before this role, Singh served as the Secretary of the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Foot notes:

- He was appointed as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) and Defence Secretary-designate.
- He is known for administrative expertise, strategic decision-making, and leadership.
- He has boosted industrial growth, investment, and policy reforms.
- He has achieved enhanced productivity, supported rural livelihoods and bolstered the animal husbandry and dairy sectors.

Praveena Rai appointed as CEO and MD of MCX

Praveena Rai has officially assumed the role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) of the Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX) as of October 31, 2024, beginning her five-year term. This appointment, announced by MCX, signifies a new chapter for the organization, as Rai brings her extensive background in banking, payments, and transaction management to lead India's largest commodity derivatives exchange.

Foot notes:

- Praveena has over 20 years of experience in the banking sector, recognized for her expertise in payments, cards, retail banking, and transaction banking.
- Her strong background in digital payments and transaction management positions her well to lead MCX through its next growth phase.
- Before joining MCX, Rai was the Chief Operating Officer at the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- She oversaw marketing, business development, product management, and operations strategy, significantly influencing India's digital payment landscape.
- Rai contributed to scaling innovative payment solutions and enhancing product offerings, driving business growth and operational efficiencies.
- Focused on strengthening cross-border payment solutions and expanding digital payment infrastructure across the region.

AWARD NEWS

Amitabh Bachchan Honors Chiranjeevi with ANR Award

On the 100th birth anniversary of Akkineni Nageswara Rao, Amitabh Bachchan presented the ANR National Award to veteran actor Chiranjeevi in Hyderabad. This award, established by the

Akkineni International Foundation, is presented annually to honor artists for their lifetime contributions to cinema.

Foot notes:

- Amitabh Bachchan appeared in Chiranjeevi's 2019 historical Telugu film 'Sye Raa Narasimha Reddy.'
- Bachchan and Nagarjuna starred together in the 1992 Hindi film 'Khuda Gawah.'
- After receiving the award, Chiranjeevi sought Bachchan's blessings by touching his feet, while Bachchan touched the feet of Chiranjeevi's mother.
- The ANR Award, established in 2005 by the Akkineni International Foundation, honors exceptional contributions to Indian cinema. Amitabh Bachchan received this award in 2014.
- Previous recipients of the award include Dev Anand, Lata Mangeshkar, SS Rajamouli, Hema Malini, Shyam Benegal, Sridevi B Kapoor, Rekha, Shabana Azmi, Anjali Devi, Vyjayantimala Bali, and Balachander.
- Chiranjeevi's upcoming film 'Vishwambhara' is set to release on January 10, 2025.



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India's Rachel Gupta crowned first Miss Grand International 2024

Rachel Gupta, a 20-year-old from Jalandhar, Punjab, has made history as the first Indian and only the third Asian to win the Miss Grand International title. She was crowned by the outgoing titleholder, Luciana Fuster of Peru. Rachel began modelling in 2022, at the age of 18. That same year, she was crowned Miss SuperTalent of the World at the 15th edition of the pageant held in Paris, France. Her run-up to the final of the latest pageant included a swimsuit and sportswear competition, a national costume parade, a preliminary competition, a closed interview session and the final show.

Foot notes:

- Rachel Gupta made history as the first Indian to win the Miss Grand International title, earning her the Grand Pageants Choice Award.
- Her win places her alongside Lara Dutta as one of India's most internationally crowned beauty queens.

- The event gained attention due to an incident involving Team Myanmar, with videos showing the pageant director removing second runner-up Thae Su Nyein's crown and sash as she exited the stage.
- Rachel's victory marks her as the 12th Miss Grand International and the first Indian to win the title.

Bhubaneswar awarded 'City with the Best Public Transport System' at UMI 2024

Bhubaneswar won the 'City with the Best Public Transport System' at the 17th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition 2024. Union Minister for Housing & Urban Affairs and Power, Manohar Lal addressed the valedictory session of the three days 17th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition 2024 at Mahatma Mandir, Gandhinagar, Gujarat, informed a report by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs. Bhubaneswar was awarded the title of 'City with the Best Public Transport System' at the 17th Urban Mobility India (UMI) Conference & Exhibition 2024. Union Minister for Housing & Urban Affairs and Power, Manohar Lal, addressed the closing session of the three-day event held at Mahatma Mandir in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, on October 27, as reported by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.

Foot notes:

- **Event Dignitaries:** Key attendees at the UMI Conference included Tokhan Sahu, Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs; Kanubhai Desai, Gujarat's Minister of Finance and Energy; K.C. Mohapatra, Odisha's Minister of Housing and Urban Development; and Srinivas R. Katikithala, Secretary of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs.
- **Union Minister's Address:** Manohar Lal highlighted India's rise to third in the world for operational rail networks under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, stating that the Indian Metro network will soon become the second largest.
- **National Common Mobility Card:** Lal emphasized that the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC), part of the Prime Minister's "One Nation One Card" vision, is being adopted by many Metros and will transform urban mobility.
- **Tokhan Sahu's Remarks:** Sahu praised the UMI conference initiative since 2008 for addressing urban mobility issues and celebrated the milestone of over 1 crore daily Metro train riders in India.
- **Conference Theme:** This year's conference focused on "Standardisation and Optimisation of Urban Transport Solutions," emphasizing the need for harmonized standards and integration of various transport modes.
- **Discussion Topics:** Key discussions included multilateral and bilateral funding aligned with the Make in India policy, the role of big data in transport planning, the E-Bus ecosystem, and innovative financing for urban transport challenges.
- **CRUT's Role:** Established six years ago, CRUT operates Mo Bus and Mo E-Ride services, providing sustainable transportation solutions in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Puri, Rourkela, Berhampur, and Sambalpur, becoming essential for efficient travel in these

cities.

Conservation scientist 'Bibhab Kumar' wins IUCN award

Bibhab Kumar Talukdar, a renowned conservation scientist from Assam, has received 'The Harry Messel Award' for Conservation Leadership from the Species Survival Commission (SSC) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The award was presented to him on Friday at the 5th IUCN SSC Leaders' Meeting in Abu Dhabi, which has brought together around 300 conservation experts to address the interconnected crises of biodiversity and climate change.

Foot notes:

- Bibhab Kumar Talukdar received 'The Harry Messel Award' for his significant contributions to species conservation and leadership within the Species Survival Commission (SSC).
- He has been associated with IUCN SSC since 1991 and became the Chair of the Asian Rhino Specialist Group in 2008.
- Talukdar facilitated three meetings for the Asian Rhino States, starting with the first in Bandar Lampung, Indonesia, to enhance conservation efforts for the three Asian rhino species.
- He is the founder Secretary General and CEO of Aaranyak, a leading biodiversity conservation organization in Northeast India.
- Talukdar has published over 70 scientific papers and coordinated more than 60 projects in the last 25 years.

Rodrigo become 1st Manchester City player to win Ballon d'Or

Since joining Manchester City in 2019, the Spain international has established himself as one of the top midfielders in world football, earning recognition with one of the sport's most prestigious awards. In achieving this, he has become the first Premier League player to win the award since 2008 and the first to secure both the European Championships and the Ballon d'Or in the same year since Matthias Sammer in 1996.

Foot notes:

- **Historic Achievement:** Rodri became the first Manchester City player to win the Ballon d'Or on October 28, defeating Real Madrid's Vinicius Jr. and Jude Bellingham to secure his first award.
- **Outstanding Season:** Rodri had a stellar 2023/24 season, solidifying his reputation as one of the top midfielders globally and contributing to Manchester City's dominant campaign.
- **Key Contributions:** He played a crucial role in securing City's record-breaking fourth consecutive Premier League title, scoring 8 goals and providing 9 assists, along with completing 85.63 passes per match with high accuracy.
- **Defensive Excellence:** Rodri made significant defensive contributions, recording 333 tackles and 150 interceptions.

- **Euro 2024 Impact:** He was instrumental in Spain's success at Euro 2024, participating in all 11 matches and scoring a vital equalizer against Georgia in the Round of 16.
- **Injury in Final:** Although he had to leave the final against England at halftime due to injury, Rodri's overall influence on the tournament was substantial.

Wagh Bakri Tea Group Received Hurun India Generational Legacy Award

The Wagh Bakri Tea Group was awarded the prestigious "Generational Legacy Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Indian Economy" by Hurun India. Presented at the inaugural Hurun India Family Business Awards, this accolade honors Wagh Bakri Tea Group's substantial impact on the Indian economy and its longstanding legacy in the tea industry.

Foot notes:

- The Desai family, represented by Managing Director Rasesh Desai and other directors, received the award from Hurun India Founder Anas Rahman Junaid and Barclays Private Clients' Dr. Nitin Singh in Mumbai on October 24, 2024.
- This accolade underscores Wagh Bakri Tea Group's expanding influence nationally and internationally.
- The group is strengthening its position as a leading national brand and is recognized globally, with its products available in over 60 countries.

About Wagh Bakri Tea Group:

CEO: Sanjay Singal

Headquarters: Ahmedabad

Founded: 1892

Sri Ravi Shankar Honoured with Fiji's Highest Civilian Award

The Republic of Fiji has awarded Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar its highest civilian honor, the "Honorary Officer of the Order of Fiji." Presented by President Ratu Wiliame M. Katonivere, the award recognizes Sri Sri's efforts in fostering peace, unity, and uplifting communities worldwide. Expressing gratitude on social media, Sri Sri wrote, "Honored to receive Fiji's highest civilian award."

Foot notes:

- **Global Recognition:** Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, founder of The Art of Living Foundation, has received top civilian honors from six countries, celebrating his humanitarian contributions worldwide.
- **The Art of Living:** Established in 1981, the foundation promotes mental health, education, environmental care, and empowerment across 180+ countries.
- **Engagement in Fiji:** During his visit, Sri Sri met with Deputy Prime Minister Viliame Gavoka and UN Resident Coordinator Dirk Wagener to explore support for youth empowerment and mental health in Fiji.
- **Reception:** The Indian High Commissioner to Fiji, P.S. Karthigeyan, hosted a reception where Sri Sri connected with various dignitaries.

Francis Ford Coppola Honored with 2025 AFI Life Achievement Award

In 2025, legendary director Francis Ford Coppola will be honored with the AFI Life Achievement Award at the Dolby Theatre, commemorating the award's 50th anniversary. Renowned for classics like *The Godfather* and *Apocalypse Now*, Coppola's work has profoundly shaped American cinema and inspired countless filmmakers. Proceeds from the event will support AFI's educational programs, with broadcasts scheduled on TNT and Turner Classic Movies.

Foot notes:

- The event will be broadcast on TNT with re-airings on Turner Classic Movies, with all proceeds supporting AFI's education and arts initiatives.
- The AFI Life Achievement Award honors individuals whose work has significantly advanced cinema and whose contributions are recognized by critics, peers, and the public.
- AFI board chair Kathleen Kennedy praised Coppola as a unique artist who has crafted seminal works in American film and inspired generations of filmmakers with his artistry and independence.
- The honor follows the release of Coppola's latest film, *Megalopolis*, which had a mixed reception, earning \$12.5 million on a \$120 million budget.
- Coppola's legacy includes iconic films like *The Godfather*, *Apocalypse Now* and *The Conversation*, as well as contributions to American cinema through mentoring other filmmakers, including family members Sofia, Gia, and Roman Coppola.

Kerala CM honoured Paris Olympic medalist P.R. Sreejesh

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan honored former India hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh. Reflecting on his achievements, Sreejesh, a bronze medalist from the Paris Olympics, remarked, "Sometimes it's difficult for me to fully comprehend what I've accomplished. However, it has been a dream journey. I want to encourage the younger generation to dream big."

Foot notes:

- Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan praised Olympian PR Sreejesh for stepping up during challenges faced by the Indian hockey team.
- He emphasized that Sreejesh is an inspiration to all athletes.
- Sreejesh starred in the bronze medal match against Spain, delivering memorable saves.
- The Indian team, led by Harmanpreet Singh, won the bronze medal with a 2-1 victory over Spain.
- Veteran goalkeeper with over 300 international caps and experience in three Olympic Games.
- Debuted at the 2010 World Cup and contributed to significant victories, including:
- The match at the Yves-du-Manoir Stadium marked Sreejesh's farewell game, concluding his international career.
- The bronze medal win represented India's second consecutive Olympic medal, a feat not achieved in 52 years.

Aitana Bonmati won Ballon d'Or award

The midfielder clinched the Ballon d'Or Féminin for 2024 after another outstanding year, leading Barcelona to their fifth consecutive Liga F title and securing victory in the Women's UEFA Champions League. She opened the scoring in the final against Lyon, contributing to a 2-0 win and earning the title of player of the tournament. At the international level, Bonmati also increased her trophy collection by winning the UEFA Nations League with Spain, scoring in the final to secure a 2-0 victory over France.

Foot notes:

- Rodri, the Manchester City and Spain midfielder, won his first Ballon d'Or during Monday's presentation.
- Aitana Bonmatí, the Barcelona and Spain star, secured her second consecutive Ballon d'Or Féminin.
- The ceremony in Paris also featured Spanish talent, with Lamine Yamal winning the award for the best player under 21.
- Rodri had a standout year in 2024, playing a vital role in the successes of both Manchester City and the Spain national team.
- Manchester City achieved a record fourth consecutive Premier League title in 2024.
- Spain was crowned champions at Euro 2024 this summer.
- Rodri finished ahead of Real Madrid's Vinícius Jr. and Jude Bellingham, who placed second and third, respectively.
- Vinícius and Bellingham were instrumental in helping Real Madrid win a record-extending 15th Champions League title and another La Liga title in 2024.

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IMPORTANT DAYS NEWS

World Day for Audiovisual Heritage is celebrated on 27th October

World Day for Audiovisual Heritage commemorates the adoption of the Recommendation for the Safeguarding and Preservation of Moving Images by the 21st General Conference in 1980. This day aims to raise public awareness about the urgent need for action and the importance of preserving audiovisual materials. Audiovisual archives serve as repositories of stories that provide insights into people's lives and diverse cultures around the globe. They represent a

valuable heritage and our collective memory, offering a rich source of knowledge that reflects the cultural, social, and linguistic diversity of our societies. These archives are crucial for our growth and understanding of the world we share.

Foot notes:

- **Global Commemoration:** World Day for Audiovisual Heritage is observed on October 27, 2024, to emphasize the importance of audiovisual documents and the urgent need for their preservation.
- **Cultural and Historical Treasures:** This day serves as a reminder of the invaluable cultural and historical significance contained in audiovisual archives, highlighting the need for collective efforts to protect them for future generations.
- **Objective of Memory Institutions:** Ensuring the preservation and accessibility of this heritage is a key goal for memory institutions and society as a whole.
- **UNESCO Initiative:** To support this objective, UNESCO has launched the project “Digitizing our shared UNESCO history,” aimed at preserving and sharing historical records and audiovisual materials related to its mission and activities.
- **Preserving Global Heritage:** This project ensures that essential aspects of our global heritage remain accessible and meaningful to all.

International Animation Day is observed on 28th October

International Animation Day (IAD), celebrated every year on October 28, was established in 2002 by the International Animated Film Association (ASIFA), a UNESCO-affiliated organization. This day honors the dynamic world of animation and aims to inspire emerging talent in the field. Animation has come a long way since 1892, when French inventor Charles-Émile Reynaud made history by projecting animated cartoons for the first time to a public audience in Paris.

Foot notes:

- International Animation Day (IAD) is celebrated annually on October 28, established in 2002 by the International Animated Film Association (ASIFA), a UNESCO branch.
- The day aims to inspire new talent and celebrate the dynamic world of animation.
- Animation's origins date back to 1892 when French inventor Charles-Émile Reynaud first projected animated cartoons for a public audience at the Theatre Optique in Paris.
- This event marked the beginning of a new artistic medium that evolved over the decades.
- ASIFA has actively promoted and elevated the art of animation, contributing to the growth of IAD.
- IAD fosters collaboration among animators, audiences, and industry professionals, enhancing appreciation for the art form.
- It encourages the next generation of animators to explore their creative potential.

World Ayurveda Day is observed on 29th October

Ayurveda, one of the oldest holistic healing systems in the world, originates from ancient India and continues to provide a comprehensive approach to health and wellness. As we approach the

9th Ayurveda Day on October 29, 2024, coinciding with Dhanvantari Jayanti, over 150 countries will unite under the theme “Ayurveda Innovations for Global Health.” This year's theme emphasizes Ayurveda’s capability to tackle pressing global health challenges, including non-communicable diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and climate-related health issues, among others.

Foot notes:

- **Ayurveda Day Observance:** Since 2016, the Government of India has celebrated Ayurveda Day annually on Dhanteras (Dhanvantari Jayanti) to promote awareness of Ayurvedic principles, medicinal herbs, and lifestyle practices.
- **Honoring Lord Dhanvantari:** This day commemorates Lord Dhanvantari's contributions to Ayurvedic medicine and aims to deepen understanding of its foundational principles and healing practices.
- **Ministry of Ayush Role:** The initiative is led by the Ministry of Ayush, highlighting Ayurveda as an essential component of India’s healthcare heritage.
- **9th Ayurveda Day:** This year's observance will be the most expansive to date, with participation from over 150 countries.
- **Theme Focus:** The theme, “Ayurveda Innovation for Global Health,” emphasizes Ayurveda’s importance in addressing global health challenges through innovative solutions.

World Thrift Day is observed on 30th October

World Thrift Day is celebrated globally on October 31 each year, with India observing it a day earlier on October 30. This day was created to raise awareness about the importance of saving money by using banks instead of storing cash at home. By promoting savings and financial security, World Thrift Day benefits both individuals and the nation. This article will explore the day’s history, significance, and purpose.

Foot notes:

- The day highlights the importance of financial security as a foundation for a stable future.
- Saving and investing wisely can yield good returns, helping to build a financial cushion for the future.
- World Thrift Day spreads awareness on the need to save and provides information on various saving options for the public.
- "Thrift" means using resources wisely to avoid depletion, promoting careful spending and saving habits.
- Savings banks play a key role in fostering a saving and investment culture, often collaborating with NGOs to increase savings accounts among the poor through campaigns and initiatives.

National Unity Day celebrated on 31st October

On October 31st, India observes National Unity Day in honor of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birth anniversary. A prominent leader in the independence movement, Patel served as the country's first Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister. Revered as the "Iron Man of India," he played a crucial role in unifying the diverse princely states into a single, independent nation. This day serves as a reminder of Patel's dedication to national unity and solidarity.

Foot notes:

- This day reinforces the significance of unity amidst India's diversity.
- Prime Minister Modi paid tribute at the Statue of Unity in Kevadia, Gujarat.
- Participated in a wreath-laying ceremony, took the Unity Oath and attended the grand Unity Day Parade.
- Expressed salutations to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, emphasizing his dedication to the nation's unity and sovereignty.
- Stated that Patel's personality and contributions will inspire future generations.
- A prominent leader in India's freedom movement and a close ally of Mahatma Gandhi.
- Played a crucial role in uniting 562 princely states into a cohesive and independent India, preserving national sovereignty and laying the foundation for unity.

OBITUARY NEWS

Renowned dancer and cultural figure Kanaka Raju passed away

Renowned Gussadi dance master and Padma Shri awardee Kanaka Raju passed away at the age of 83 in Komram Bheem Asifabad district, Telangana. He died on Friday night due to age-related ailments. His funeral is scheduled to take place on Saturday at Marlavai village in the district. Raju was known for running a school dedicated to teaching Gussadi, the popular folk dance of Telangana.

Foot notes:

- **Cultural Significance:** Gussadi dance is celebrated for its vibrant expressions and rhythmic movements, often performed at festivals and community gatherings.
- **Promotion of Tradition:** Kanaka Raju's efforts in promoting and preserving this traditional art form were highly commendable.
- **Inspiring Younger Generations:** Through performances and workshops, he showcased the rich heritage of the Gussadi community, inspiring youth to engage with and celebrate their folk traditions.
- **Preserving Cultural Heritage:** His dedication ensured that essential elements of this cultural heritage continued to thrive in their authentic form.

Justice KS Puttaswamy, Key Advocate for Right to Privacy passed away

Justice KS Puttaswamy, former Karnataka High Court judge, passed away at the age of 98. Born in February 1926 in Kolar, Karnataka, he served on the High Court bench from 1977 until his retirement in 1986. In 2012, he filed a Supreme Court petition challenging the Aadhaar

scheme, which resulted in the landmark 2017 ruling affirming privacy as a fundamental right under the Indian Constitution.

Foot notes:

- Born in 1926 near Bengaluru, Justice KS Puttaswamy began his legal career in 1952 at the Mysore High Court.
- He became a senior government advocate and was appointed as a Karnataka High Court judge in 1977, serving until 1986.
- Post-retirement, he held the position of vice chairperson of the Central Administrative Tribunal in Bengaluru.
- In 2012, at age 86, he challenged the Aadhaar scheme's constitutional validity, which was implemented solely by executive order.
- The resulting case, Justice KS Puttaswamy (Retd) vs Union of India led to the Supreme Court's landmark 2017 ruling affirming privacy as a fundamental right.
- In August 2018, a nine-judge bench upheld the Aadhaar scheme with specific conditions.

Bibek Debroy, Chairman of PM's Economic Advisory Council, Passed Away

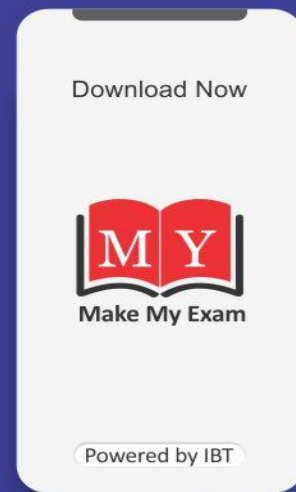
Bibek Debroy, esteemed economist and chairman of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (EAC-PM), has passed away at 69 after being admitted to AIIMS for treatment. Prime Minister Narendra Modi honored Debroy's legacy, highlighting his vast contributions to economics and public policy. Dr. Debroy was a distinguished scholar with expertise spanning economics, history, culture, politics, and spirituality. His work left a lasting impact on India's intellectual sphere.

Foot notes:

- He has held positions at institutions such as Presidency College, the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics and the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade.
- He also directed a legal reform project for the Ministry of Finance in collaboration with the UNDP. Until 2019, he served as a member of NITI Aayog.
- He has also made notable contributions through his translations of Sanskrit texts, including the Mahabharata and the Bhagavad Gita.

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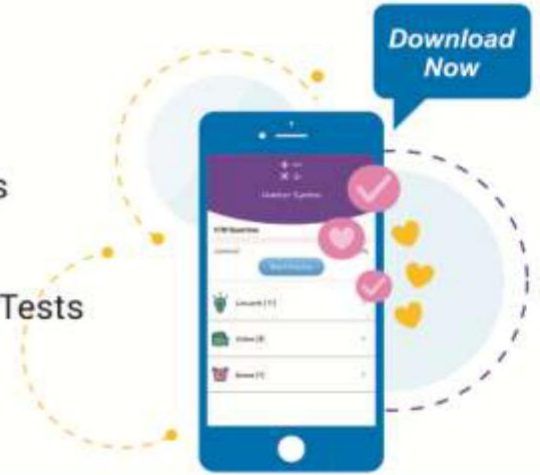
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