

Weekly Current Affairs

17-23 September, 2023

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NATIONAL NEWS

1. Govt relaxes domestic content requirement for solar cells under PM-KUSUM till March 2024.

- The Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) has relaxed the domestic content requirement (DCR) norms for solar cells under Component C of the PM KUSUM scheme till March 2024. In August last year, the Ministry waived off domestic requirement norms for projects awarded on or before June 20, 2023. It has again received various representations regarding extension of DCR waiver for solar cells under Component C (FLS) owing to the ongoing bidding process.
- PM-KUSUM or the Pradhan Mantri Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyaan is a demand-driven scheme and, therefore, quantities or capacities are allocated under the three components of the scheme based on demand received from the states. The Component C under PM KUSUM is to achieve solarisation of 15 lakh grid-connected agriculture pumps through individual pump solarisation (IPS) and feeder level solarisation (FLS). The beneficiaries under Component-C can be individual farmers, water user associations, primary agriculture credit societies and community or cluster-based irrigation systems.

2. The indefinite Rail-Roko movement called by Kurmi community began in Jharkhand

- Railway services out of Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha are staring at a major disruption later this week as several Kurmi organisations gear up for indefinite railway blockades across four railway stations in Jharkhand and five in neighbouring states of West Bengal and Odisha.
- The blockades would be a rerun of the similar protests undertaken by several Kurmi communities in September last year to demand their recognition as a scheduled tribe from the OBC status which they currently enjoy.

3. 13th Indo-Pacific Armies Chiefs Conference (IPACC) to be held from 26 to 27 of September in New Delhi

- The Indian and the US armies will co-host 13th IPACC, 47th IPAMS and 9th SELF, a three-day conference of Chiefs of Armies and delegates of 35 countries in New Delhi from 25th to 27th September. The central theme for this forum is “Together for Peace: Sustaining Peace and Stability in the Indo-Pacific Region.”
- This event will be organised in Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt and will see over 150 delegates participate in various plenary and round-table sessions. A joint press conference will be held with General Manoj Pande, Chief of the Army Staff, Indian Army and General Randy George, Vice Chief of Staff of the US Army.

4. India Ranks First Among 154 Nations in Grassroot Adoption of Crypto

- The average, middle class populations of India, Nigeria, and Thailand are driving the grassroot adoption of cryptocurrencies by engaging with digital assets. The notion has been shared by crypto research firm Chainalysis, in the fourth instalment of its Global Crypto Adoption Index report. India has topped this index of 154 countries, showing that crypto culture is finding its place in the day-to-day financial and investments activities for Indians. Nigeria, Vietnam, US, and Ukraine have followed India on the index to secure the second, third, and fourth rankings, respectively.
- On the Chainalysis index, India has bagged the first rank in crypto transactions recorded in both retail and non-retail DeFi transactions. In terms of peer-to-peer exchange trade volume, India secured the fifth rank, whereas Nigeria ranked first in the category.

5. PM Narendra Modi to inaugurate 16 Atal Awasiya Vidyalayas built across UP

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Varanasi to inaugurate 16 Atal Awasiya Vidyalayas built across Uttar Pradesh. These are built at a cost of over 11 hundred crore rupees to further enhance access to quality education for children of labourers, construction workers and orphans due to COVID-19 pandemic. Each school is constructed on an area of 10 to 15 acres with classrooms, sports ground, recreational areas, a mini auditorium, hostel complex, mess and residential flats for staff. These residential schools intend to eventually accommodate 1000 students each.
- Prime Minister Modi will also lay the foundation stone of the International Cricket Stadium in Varanasi. The cricket stadium, to be built in Ganjari, Rajatalab, Varanasi will be developed in more than 30 acre area, at a cost of about 450 crore rupees.

6. Goa CM Pramod Sawant Unveils Initiatives to Empower Homemakers and Entrepreneurs

- Goa CM Pramod Sawant, distributed Griha Adhar sanction orders to numerous beneficiaries to support homemakers financially, fostering their independence and improving their quality of life. Apart from the sanction orders, which are a result of the initiative of the Directorate of Women and Child Development, the CM also launched the Chavath-e-Bazaar. It is aimed at empowering Goan entrepreneurs and self-help groups, a digital initiative under the Swayampura Goa Programme organised by the Directorate of Planning, Statistics and Evaluation.
- Sawant also flagged off the Chavath-e-Bazaar vehicle, symbolizing a new era of empowerment for rural artisans and entrepreneurs in Goa. The CM was accompanied by Poriem MLA Deviya Rane, Bicholim MLA Chandrakant Shetye, Mayem MLA Premendra Shet, Vijay Saxena, Director Directorate of

Planning and Statistics, Sangeeta Parab, Director of Directorate of Women and Child Development, and Dolly Sureka, Vice President, Swiggy READ | Minister Lekhi visits naval aviation museum in Goa, lays keel for legacy 'stitched ship'.

7. India Ranks First Among 154 Nations in Grassroot Adoption of Crypto

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8. Odisha signs MoU with six banks for giving banking services in unbanked gram panchayats

- The Odisha government roped in six public sector banks for providing banking services in unbanked gram panchayats of the state through customer service point (CSP) plus banking outlets.
- The banks are State Bank of India (SBI), Punjab National Bank (PNB), Union Bank of India (UBI), UCO Bank, Bank of India (BoI) and Bank of Baroda (BoB). Odisha is the first state in the country to adopt such exemplary model for providing banking services to all panchayats. Though financial inclusion is a high priority agenda of the government, it continues to be a critical challenge since banking penetration in the state is quite low and not uniform across districts

9. Shri Parshottam Rupala inaugurates Second Edition of ICAR-CIBA's Shrimp Farmers Conclave-2023 at Navsari, Gujarat

- Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala inaugurated Second Edition of ICAR-CIBA's (ICAR-Central Institute of Brackish water Aquaculture) Shrimp Farmers Conclave-2023 at the Navsari Agricultural University Campus in Gujarat. About 410 aqua farmers across the coastal districts of Gujarat participated in the conclave.
- Shri Parshottam Rupala conveyed his gratitude to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, for approving the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampadan Yojana with the financial outlay of Rs. 20,050 crores for the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture sector. Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) to establish a National Genetic Improvement Facility for shrimp breeding.

10. Gujarat passes bill reserving 27% local body seats for OBCs

- The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Gujarat has passed a bill in the assembly that raises reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBC) community in local self government bodies like panchayats, municipalities and civic corporations to 27 per cent from the current 10 per cent.
- The Gujarat Local Authorities Laws (Amendment) Bill 2023 was passed through a majority voice vote after all the 17 Congress MLAs, including Congress Legislative Party leader Amit Chavda and senior MLA Arjun Modhwadia, staged a walkout in protest demanding higher ratio of reservation and tabling of a report of the commission headed by former Supreme Court Justice K S Zaveri.
- The state government announced 27 per cent reservation for OBCs in the local governing bodies on the basis of a report submitted by the Zaveri commission.

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11. Vishwakarma scheme will be launched by PM Modi on September 17

- The 'PM Vishwakarma Yojana' will be launched on the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 73rd birthday. It is a matter of happiness that 'PM Vishwakarma Yojana' will be launched on the occasion of PM Modi's birthday. As part of the initiative, the government will provide support, skill and the right tools to the artisans and craftsmen.
- The scheme has a Rs 13,000 crore outlay over five years up to 2027-28. Speaking while inaugurating Yashobhoomi, or the India International Convention Centre at Delhi's Dwarka, Modi also said that India is on its way to becoming a major destination for conference tourism and the new centre, along with the 'Bharat Mandapam', will be a medium for showcasing India of the future.

12. Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launches 'e-Bhoomi' Portal for land purchase

- Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar launched the new 'e-Bhoomi' portal, with the objective of easing the process of purchasing land for government projects with the landowners' consent. The government aims to purchase land in a transparent manner and apart from farmers, aggregators will

also be able to offer land on this portal, the CM informed. The offer of land would be valid for six months.

- Farmers can offer their land independently or through listed aggregators, with a minimum offer of 10 acres mandated for voluntary offers made by aggregators. To facilitate and coordinate the entire process, nodal officers have been identified in each department and at the district level. The process will be initiated on automatic mode considering the rates being offered by the individual or aggregator.

13. Ministry of Railways launches ‘Swachhata Pakhwada-2023’

- Ministry of Railways has launched Swachhata Pakhwada 2023. Swachhata Pakhwada – 2023 was inaugurated by Smt. Jaya Varma Sinha, Chairperson & CEO, Railway Board on 15th September, 2023 by administering Swachhata Pledge in Rail Bhawan.
- Swachhata pledge was administered to entire Railway family which includes employees of Railways along with senior officials of Railway Zones and Divisions connected via video conferencing. Swachhata Pledge taken by entire Railway family focused on one’s commitment towards cleanliness, devoting hundred hours per year for cleanliness and propagating the message of Swachh Bharat Mission.

14. PM Modi inaugurates YashoBhoomi convention centre on his birthday

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the first phase of the International Convention and Expo Centre (IICC), YashoBhoomi, in Delhi's Dwarka on his birthday (September 17). ‘Bharat Mata ki Jai’ chants reverberated at the convention centre after PM Modi inaugurated the YashoBhoomi.
- PM Modi took a metro ride on his way to the Convention Centre. He was seen interacting with the commuters in the metro.. Yashobhoomi stands as a testament to India’s commitment to world-class event hosting, boasting an expansive project area of over 8.9 lakh square metres and a built-up area exceeding 1.8 lakh square metres.

15. Maharashtra Issues Notification On Name Change Of Aurangabad, Osmanabad

- The Eknath Shinde-led Maharashtra government has issued a notification on the change of names of Aurangabad and Osmanabad districts as Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and Dharashiv respectively.
- The suggestions and objections sought a few months ago have been considered and the decision to change the names at the sub-division, village, taluka and district levels has been taken, the notification issued by the Revenue Department. The decision to rename Aurangabad and Osmanabad was taken in the previous Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government's last cabinet meeting

chaired by the then chief minister Uddhav Thackeray on June 29, 2022 just before he resigned.

16. Assam Governor Gulab Chand Kataria Introduces ‘Sarpanch Samvaad’ Mobile App

- Assam Governor Shri Gulab Chand Kataria launched the ‘Sarpanch Samvad’ mobile app at Raj Bhavan in Guwahati, Assam. The ‘Sarpanch Samvad’ app has been developed by the Quality Council of India (QCI).
- It’s Objective is to provide comprehensive support to sarpanchs (village heads) and promote their growth as leaders. It’s aim is to connect approximately 2.5 lakh sarpanchs across India & serves as a holistic platform for networking, knowledge dissemination, and collaboration among sarpanchs.

17. Indian Oil becomes title sponsor of MotoGP Bharat

- MotoGP Bharat has roped in IndianOil as the title sponsor for the event scheduled to take place at the Buddh International Circuit in Greater Noida from September 22 to 24, its promoter Fairstreet Sports said in a statement.
- "We are thrilled to welcome IndianOil as our title sponsor for MotoGP Bharat. As we gear up for the country's biggest racing event, this association with one of India's energy giants adds a new layer of excitement to it," said Pushkar Nath Srivastava, founder and chief operating officer of FairStreet Sports.

18. Union Minister of Civil Aviation inaugurates ‘Udaan Bhawan’ at Delhi’s Safdarjung Airport

- Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, officially opened 'Udaan Bhawan,' a consolidated office complex located within Delhi's Safdarjung Airport, along with the introduction of a pilot e-wallet facility. Udaan Bhawan promises to play a pivotal role in facilitating enhanced coordination and efficiency among various regulatory authorities operating under the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA).
- The newly inaugurated Udaan Bhawan is poised to become the nerve center of aviation oversight in India. This modern facility will house several key regulatory bodies, including the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA), and the Airports Authority of India (AAI). By co-locating these vital entities, Udaan Bhawan aims to foster seamless collaboration and streamline administrative processes within the civil aviation sector.

19. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin Unveils the Kalaigiar Women’s Rights Fund Scheme

- On C N Annadurai's birthday anniversary, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Stalin launches the 'Kalaigiar Magalir Urimai Thogai Thittam' initiative with the goal

of empowering the women of the state. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin marked the birth anniversary of Dravidian icon C N Annadurai by unveiling a groundbreaking initiative aimed at uplifting women across the state. The initiative, aptly named the “Kalaingar Magalir Urimai Thogai Thittam” scheme, holds the potential to bring about a significant positive change in the lives of countless women in Tamil Nadu.

- According to the scheme, monthly financial assistance of Rs. 1,000 will be provided to all eligible women beneficiaries of Tamil Nadu. CM Stalin also distributed ATM cards to the beneficiaries of the scheme. This monthly financial assistance will decrease poverty. The scheme received 1 crore 60 lakh applications since August. 1 crore 6 lakh 50 thousand women were declared as right beneficiaries.

20. Uttar Pradesh Government Introduces Special Gift Deed Scheme

- Uttar Pradesh Government launches ‘Gift Deed Scheme’ to reduce property related family disputes in courts. In a bid to foster harmony and alleviate property-related family disputes, the CM Yogi Adityanath led UP government initiated a special Gift Deed Scheme which has benefited over 43,574 people.
- Under the new scheme, the stamp duty for such transactions has been reduced to Rs 5,000. Before this scheme, individuals were required to pay stamp duty equivalent to the prevailing circle rate when executing a gift deed. He mentioned that prior to the implementation of this scheme, property registrations were comparatively lower. Under the new policy, in Uttar Pradesh, on donation of immovable property to certain family members such as son, daughter, father, mother, husband, wife, daughter-in-law, real brother (or, in case real brother deceased, his wife), real sister, and son-in-law, a maximum stamp duty has been fixed at Rs 5,000.

21. NHAI Inks Agreement to Develop Multi Modal Logistics Park at Bengaluru

- Bengaluru multi-modal logistics park is located at a distance of 58 km from Bengaluru Airport and 48 km from Bengaluru city railway station. The park will be developed in three phases. The first phase is expected to be completed in two years. MMLP will cater to about 30 million metric tonnes (MMT) cargo by the end of the concession period of 45 years and will give a huge boost to the industrial zones in the catchment region such as Bengaluru and Tumkur.
- Development of MMLP is a key initiative of the Government of India to improve the country's freight logistics sector by enabling efficient inter-modal freight movement to lower overall freight costs and time, provide efficient warehousing, improve tracking and traceability of consignments thereby enhancing the efficiency of the Indian logistics sector.

22. Khadi and Village Industries Commission signs three MoUs to promote Khadi Products

- Embracing Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's mantra of 'Local for Vocal' and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, inked three separate MoUs, and laid foundation stone of 'Modern Khadi of New India' in the Amritkal of Independent India .
- In presence of Shri Manoj Kumar, Chairman, Khadi & Village Industries Commission these agreements were signed with Prasar Bharati, NBCC (India) Limited, and Digital India Corporation. The objective of these MoUs is to prepare a roadmap to modernize the Khadi and Village Industries Commission and popularize its products among the youth as per the vision of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Shri Kumar reiterated that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, Khadi has now become identity self-reliant India.

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23. Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia to inaugurate new infrastructure at Tezu airport on 24th September 2023

- Minister for Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya M Scindia along with Pema Khandu, Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh will inaugurate the newly developed infrastructure of Tezu Airport on 24th September 2023. Tezu Airport is a domestic airport located in the town of Tezu which operates through a single runway. The airport is developed on 212 acres of land, and is capable of handling operations for ATR 72 type of aircraft.
- Tezu airport was operationalized in 2018 under the RCS UDAN scheme of the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The airport is currently connected to Dibrugarh, Imphal & Guwahati through regular scheduled flights by Alliance Air & Flybig Airline.

24. Rajasthan Elections 2023, BJP's mega poll outreach has its X-factor missing

- The Bharatiya Janata Party's Parivartan Sankalp Yatra, a grand outreach to voters in poll-bound Rajasthan, on Wednesday arrived in Jhalawar. Besides its historical magnificence, the district is home to BJP leader and two-time Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje who has held this constituency in various capacities for 33 years now.

- This was the first time in two decades that a BJP yatra of this scale and magnitude had its star power, Vasundhara Raje, missing. Four 'Parivartan Yatras' were launched between September 2 and 5 with an aim to cover all the 200 Assembly seats and close to 9,000 km across the state.

25. ACKO launches campaign 'Health Insurance ki Subah ho Gayi Mamu' for its newly introduced ACKO Platinum Health Plan

- ACKO Platinum Health Plan. As per the company, the plan has features including 100% bill payment, no room rent capping, zero waiting period, among others. To launch its Health Insurance product, ACKO has brought back two characters of Munna Bhai and Circuit in its campaign titled 'Health Insurance ki Subah ho Gayi Mamu'. The campaign directed by filmmaker Rajkumar Hirani, features Sanjay Dutt and Arshad Warsi in their original roles and questions the current health insurance system.
- The company claims that the series of ad films focuses on educating the audience on zero waiting period, 100% bill payment, benefits of providing full disclosures of ailments for a stress-free claim process, and ease of filing claims.

26. NHAI Collaborates with DMRC to Strengthen Design & Construction of Bridges and Other Structures

- In its endeavor to provide world-class National Highways network, NHAI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) for review of designs of various bridges/ structures, safety aspects of NHAI projects and capacity building of NHAI officials. The MoU was signed in presence of NHAI Chairman Shri Santosh Kumar Yadav and Dr. Vikas Kumar, Managing Director, DMRC along with other senior officials from NHAI and DMRC. This initiative will strengthen NHAI's 'Design Division' that reviews planning, designing, construction and maintenance of bridges, structures, tunnels and RE walls on National Highways across the country.
- This agreement will remain in effect for a period of two years. This initiative highlights collaboration between two Government Organizations to share best practices and work together to enhance transport infrastructure network contributing towards the goal of Nation Building.

27. India wins bid to host 17th International Congress on the Chemistry of Cement

- India's leading research and academic institutes, National Council for Cement and Building Materials (NCCBM) along with IIT Delhi successfully presented India's bid before the steering committee members of the conference during the ongoing 16th ICCC at Bangkok, Thailand.
- The conference is the largest event of its kind which reviews the progress of research in the area of cement and concrete, it added. The gathering has been held generally at intervals of four to six years since 1918.

28. The 14th edition of Global Skills Summit begins, to focus on empowering youth and creating future

- The theme of the two-day Summit is building skills, empowering youth, and creating a future. The Summit aims to focus on creating a road map for a high-quality industry-led skilling ecosystem in India. He further added that the ecosystem of education, skills, and entrepreneurship in the country must equip the youth with skills and employment opportunities as the economy grows.
- The Summit will see future-forward discussions and deliberations on the ways to make the youth of India skilled for the industry and navigate the skilling and education ecosystem in India.

29. UNESCO Releases Inaugural Guidance on the Application of Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) in Education

- UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) has published its inaugural set of guidelines on the utilisation of Generative AI (GenAI) in education. These guidelines, released come as a response to the rapid proliferation of AI-powered educational tools and the challenges they pose to the traditional education system.
- One of the key recommendations put forth by UNESCO is the urgent need for governmental regulation of GenAI usage in educational settings. The organisation emphasised the importance of protecting data privacy and implementing age limits for GenAI users, especially to shield younger students from potential risks associated with the technology.

30. The 14th edition of the World Spice Congress begins in Navi Mumbai

- The 14th edition of the World Spice Congress (WSC) began at Vashi in Navi Mumbai. World Spice Congress (WSC) was planned and conceived in 1990 as a forum for discussion and interaction between the importers and exporters of spices.
- It is the conglomeration of the global spice industry that has become the most apt platform to deliberate the concerns and considerations of the sector over its three-decades-long presence. Since its inception, it has been Organized under the leadership of the Spices Board, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India. The theme of the WSC 2023 is VISION 2030: S-P-I-C-E-S, which stands for sustainability, productivity, innovation, collaboration, excellence and safety.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1. India and Russia agreed to train Indian seafarers in polar and Arctic waters

- India and Russia agreed to train Indian seafarers in polar and arctic waters in this far eastern Russian port as the two sides discussed ways to widen maritime cooperation including possibility of usage of new transport corridors like the Northern Sea Route as well as the Eastern Maritime Corridor.
- The two sides also agreed to train Indian seafarers in Polar and Arctic waters at the Russian Maritime Training Institute, named after GI Admiral Nevelsky, which is equipped with simulator training facilities, in Vladivostok.

2. India Global Forum and World Governments Summit signed an MoU to develop the Emerging Economies Programme

- India Global Forum and World Governments Summit have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop an Emerging Economies Programme. The programme will convene key stakeholders, including government officials, business leaders, economists, and experts to foster high-level discussions on sustainable economic growth, geo-economic perspectives, and innovative solutions.
- The partnership will also focus on cultivating and fostering thought leadership, producing research on emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities that pertain to the Global South. The programme will also progressively enhance the data on the region for future governments.

3. Shantiniketan included in UNESCO World Heritage list

- Shantiniketan, founded by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore in 1901, has earned a place on UNESCO's World Heritage List. This prestigious institution, situated in the university town of West Bengal's Birbhum district, was established as a residential school and a centre for the arts. It was built on the principles of ancient Indian traditions and a vision for humanity that transcended religious and cultural boundaries.
- The inclusion of Shantiniketan on the UNESCO World Heritage List was announced during the 45th session of the World Heritage Committee in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, which took place until September 25. This recognition makes Shantiniketan the 41st UNESCO World Heritage Site in India and the third in West Bengal, joining the ranks of the Sundarbans and the Darjeeling Mountain Railways.

4. United Kingdom commits \$2 billion to Green Climate Fund

- A day after G20 leaders committed to talking climate change and assuring developed countries will contribute climate funds for developing nations, United Kingdom has committed \$2 billion towards Green Climate Fund. The UK will contribute £1.62 billion (\$2 billion) to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which was established by 194 countries following the Copenhagen Accord at COP15. The GCF is the largest global fund dedicated to supporting developing countries

to reduce global emissions and helping communities adapt to the effects of climate change.

- This \$2 billion commitment represents a 12.7 per cent increase on the UK's previous contribution to the GCF for the period of 2020-2023, which was itself a doubling of their initial funding to establish the fund in 2014. In addition to the funding, the UK government will continue to stress the importance of the GCF delivering results with even greater speed, demonstrating value for money in all of its activities. This includes asking the GCF to further improve its delivery for those countries most vulnerable to climate change, particularly Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

5. Myanmar not allowed to chair 2026 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) meet

- Southeast Asian leaders have decided that Myanmar will not take over the rotating leadership of their regional bloc as scheduled in 2026, according to Asian diplomats and the leader of the Philippines. The decision, revealed at an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) leaders' summit taking place in Indonesia, is the latest blow to efforts by Myanmar's ruling generals to gain international recognition after violently seizing power in 2021.
- Western governments have condemned the Myanmar military's removal of Aung San Suu Kyi's democratically elected government and have demanded her release from detention, along with other officials. The Philippines agreed to take over the regional bloc's chairmanship in 2026 at the ASEAN summit, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr said in a statement, citing what he told fellow leaders in the closed-door meetings. ASEAN's leadership rotates annually based on the alphabetical order of the English names of the member states.

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6. Cabinet approves signing of an MoU between India and Armenia

- The Government approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of India and the Ministry of High-Tech Industry of Armenia on Cooperation in the field of sharing successful Digital Solutions implemented at the Population Scale for Digital Transformation.
- The MoU intends to promote closer cooperation and exchange of experiences and digital technologies-based solutions in the implementation of digital

transformational initiatives of both the country. It envisages improved collaboration leading to employment opportunities in the field of IT. The MoU will remain in force for a period of three years.

NEW APPOINTMENTS AND PERSON IN NEWS

1. Srinivasan K. Swamy Elected Chairman of the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) for 2023-2024

- In a unanimous decision, Srinivasan K. Swamy, the Executive Chairman of R.K. Swamy Hansa Group, has been elected as the Chairman of the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) for the term 2023-2024. This significant appointment reflects Mr. Swamy's extensive experience and leadership in the advertising and media industry.
- Alongside Mr. Swamy, other prominent figures were also elected to key positions within the Bureau for the upcoming year. Srinivasan K. Swamy is a highly regarded figure in the advertising and media world. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Asian Federation of Advertising Associations and has held pivotal leadership roles in numerous prominent organizations.
- These include the International Advertising Association (IAA), IAA India Chapter, Confederation of Asian Advertising Agency Associations, Advertising Agencies Association of India, Advertising Standards Council of India, All India Management Association, Madras Chamber of Commerce & Industry, and Madras Management Association.

2. Tata power and SIDBI partner to launch affordable financing for msme in rooftop solar segment

- Tata Power Solar Systems Limited (TPSSL), a fully-owned subsidiary of Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TREPL), the energy solutions arm of the Tata Group, has forged a collaboration with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), the primary financial institution serving MSMEs in India. This partnership aims to offer financing solutions to MSMEs seeking to install rooftop Solar PV systems from Tata Power or its authorized distribution partners.
- Tata Power Solar and SIDBI have jointly introduced "The Big Solar Fest" to promote the adoption of solar energy among MSMEs during the upcoming festive season. This initiative offers a zero percent processing fee and provides an online application portal for MSMEs to access the scheme's advantages.

3. Nihar Malaviya named as permanent CEO of Penguin Random House

- Nihar Malaviya has been named as permanent CEO of Penguin Random House, nine months after he was appointed the interim chief executive. Malaviya succeeded Markus Dohle, who departed weeks after a federal judge struck down Penguin Random House's attempted merger with Simon & Schuster, a deal

Dohle had pushed for. Penguin Random House, the world's largest trade publisher, has been undergoing a company-wide reorganization in 2023, with numerous senior editors either laid off or departing under a voluntary retirement plan.

- Bertelsmann, the German media conglomerate, has owned Random House since 1998. Random House and Penguin merged in 2013.

BANKING

1. Shri Dharmendra Pradhan launches 'Skills on Wheels' initiative with NSDC and IndusInd Bank to promote skilling

- Union Minister for Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, Shri Dharmendra Pradhan and Speaker, Lok Sabha, Shri Om Birla launched 'Skills on Wheels' initiative with NSDC and IndusInd Bank with a flagging off ceremony. Under the partnership, 60,000 youth will be empowered over a period of five years with the objective of improving livelihood of rural households by providing relevant skills training to its youth population.
- Under the collaboration, a customized bus with retrofitted tools will promote the 'Skill India Mission' initiative through 'Skills on Wheels' and will travel across the length and breadth of aspirational and backward districts. The initiative is aimed at spreading awareness at grass root level about free skill training programs enabling youth to profoundly change the trajectory of their lives through robust skill training. Aligned with this mission, this partnership with IndusInd Bank is aimed at empowering the youth of the nation through the 'Skills on Wheels' project.

2. CCI approves the acquisition of approximately 24.16% of total equity shareholding in Quality Care India Limited by Centella Mauritius Holdings Limited

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the acquisition of approximately 24.16% of the total equity shareholding in Quality Care India Limited by Centella Mauritius Holdings Limited. The proposed combination relates to acquisition of approximately 24.16% of the total equity shareholding in Quality Care India Limited (QCIL) by Centella Mauritius Holdings Limited.
- Centella Mauritius Holdings Limited is a newly incorporated special purpose investment vehicle incorporated in Mauritius and currently has no operations in India. The Acquirer is majorly owned and controlled by an entity, which is advised by the affiliates of TPG Inc. (TPG), the ultimate holding company of the TPG group.

3. SIDBI to raise Rs 10,000 crore from rights issue next fiscal

- Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi), which refinances SME loans, plans to float a Rs 10,000-crore rights issue next fiscal to expand its

equity capital as it expects to grow assets to Rs 5 lakh crore by March 2024 from about Rs 4 lakh crore in March 2023.

- The central government owns 20.8 per cent in Sidbi, while State Bank of India holds 15.65 per cent and Life Insurance Corporation 13.33 per cent. The rest of the equity is held by other public financial institutions and banks. The lender's loan growth optimism comes from the demand for direct financing that is growing by leaps and bounds, which two years ago was only 7 per cent of its book but is now 14 per cent.

4. SEBI Details Procedure Allowing Board Seats For REIT, Inv IT Holders

- SEBI notified the framework that allows unit holders of real estate investment trusts and infrastructure investment trusts to nominate representatives on the boards. . SEBI is in receipt of representation from market participants that right to nominate directors on the board of Investment Manager is required by institutional investors to protect their investments in the Inv IT.
- It has also be submitted by market participants that such right will enhance governance and ensure that the interest of the unit holders is safeguarded, as the unit holders will have more say on the investment decisions and activities undertaken by the Investment Manager of the Inv IT.

5. RBI Issues Revised Norms for Classification and Valuation of Investment Portfolios by Banks

- The Reserve Bank of India has revised norms for the classification, valuation and operation of investment portfolios of commercial banks. According to the new guidelines released on September 12, banks will have to classify their investments – except investments in their own subsidiaries, joint ventures and associates – into three categories from the next financial year: available for sale (AFS), held to maturity (HTM) and a new category called fair value through profit and loss, or FVTPL.
- The revised directions include principle-based classification of investment portfolio, tightening of regulations around transfers to/from held to maturity (HTM) category and sales out of HTM, inclusion of non-SLR securities in HTM subject to fulfilment of certain conditions and symmetric recognition of gains and losses.

6. ICC releases official Anthem 'Dil Jashn Bole' for Men's Cricket World Cup featuring Ranveer Singh and influencers.

- The countdown for the much-awaited ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 has reached its final stretch, and ahead of it fans have been treated with the release of its official anthem, 'Dil Jashn Bole'.
- Since India is the sole host of the ICC event this year, BCCI is leaving no stone unturned in the promotional activities. Hence, the anthem also features

Dhanashree Verma, the wife of Indian cricketer Yuzvendra Chahal, and several social media influencers.

7. BCCI announces SBI Life as Official Partner for domestic & international season 2023-26

- Cricket as sport has unfailingly united our nation over the years and BCCI's undeniable role in nurturing the sport across the length and breadth of the country is well respected. As a brand driven to make a meaningful connect with the consumer, SBI Life's association as the official partner of BCCI with its undisputed reach and impeccable credibility is a marketer's delight.
- We look forward to leveraging SBI Life's association with BCCI to establish a deeper connect with the consumer and impress upon the need for insurance as an enabler for individuals to pursue their dreams. We sincerely hope the visibility offered by the sport will go a long way in spreading awareness about the importance of insurance and furthering the national agenda of 'Insurance for all' by 2047.

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8. IRDAI Established Interdisciplinary Standing Committee on Cyber Security

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a standing committee on cyber security to regularly review the threats inherent in the existing or emerging technologies. The committee, set up following the issue of the Information and Cyber Security Guidelines this April, will also suggest appropriate changes to the framework to strengthen the cyber security posture and resilience on the insurance industry.
- The cyber security norms mandated insurers and intermediaries to adopt a risk-based approach and take necessary measures to secure their systems and data against cyber threats. This includes identifying and assessing risks, implementation of appropriate security controls, incident response plans, and regular security audits.

9. Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Launches Maxima Savings Account and Business Maxima Current Account for Premium Customers

- Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (Ujjivan SFB), a leading small finance bank, announced the introduction of the Maxima Savings Account and Business Maxima Current Account for the premium customer segment. These new offerings aim to improve the banking experience for both new and existing customers by providing a variety of services and benefits. The products are designed to provide customers with various benefits, superior features, and a premium experience to meet their various financial and banking needs.
- The annual interest rate on the Maxima Savings Account is up to 7.5%, one of the highest in the industry, and customers can open the account with Rs. 1 lakh. Customers also have the flexibility to maintain Rs. 15 lakh or more in fixed deposits to meet the balance eligibility criteria of the Maxima Savings Account, an option not available with other standard savings accounts. Other exciting services offered by Maxima Savings Account include higher transaction limits, Free cheque & DD Issuances, Free transactions across all channels, and unlimited cash deposits and withdrawals at any branch. A Complimentary Health Prime Benefit is also offered with the Maxima Savings Account to applicable customers.

10. Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) Launches Online Safe Deposit Locker Allotment Service

- Public sector Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) announced the launch of the online allotment of safe deposit locker facility. The facility is now conveniently accessible online within two minutes, requiring just a few clicks on the bank's portal - www.iob.in. This ensures that both customers and non-customers can avail locker facility from the comfort of their homes, 'Any Time, Any Where,' according to a statement from the bank.
- This feature not only saves time for our valued customers, including both Gen Z and senior citizens, but also enhances accessibility and efficiency. This digital upgrade is a testament to our commitment to providing the best banking solutions.

11. World Bank praises India's digital public infrastructure push

- Advocating DPI's potential in helping nations leapfrog digital transformation, a G20 document prepared by World Bank has praised India's approach in unlocking the power of digital public infrastructure, including Aadhaar and UPI, for financial inclusion. The impact of DPI goes beyond inclusive finance, to supporting health, education, and sustainability, the forward of the document 'G20 policy recommendations for advancing financial inclusion and productivity gains through DPI'.
- The India stack exemplifies this approach, combining digital ID, interoperable payments, a digital credentials ledger, and account aggregation. In just six years, it has achieved a remarkable 80 per cent financial inclusion rate—a feat that would have taken nearly five decades without a DPI approach.

12. Dhanlaxmi Bank independent director Sridhar Kalyanasundaram resigns from board

- Dhanlaxmi Bank Ltd.'s independent director Sridhar Kalyanasundaram has resigned from the board with effect Sept. 16., citing “factionalism” to “unethical” business conduct. Kalyanasundaram, appointed on Dec. 5, 2022, also referred to whistle-blower issues, rights issue of the bank and the “belligerent attitude” of Shivan JK, managing director and chief executive officer, among other reasons for his exit, according to the company’s exchange filing.
- In his resignation letter, Kalyanasundaram has raised issues like factionalism in the board, his differences regarding rights issue and the alleged ‘lack of in depth banking knowledge’ in other members. The former independent director also raised the “probity and lack of consensus” on the various whistle-blower issues, as a reason of resignation.

13.RBI sets 30-day deadline for banks and NBFCs to release property documents after loan settlement

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued new guidelines for loan settlement, which require banks and NBFCs to release all original movable and immovable property documents within 30 days of full repayment/settlement of the loan account. The move is aimed at addressing the issues faced by borrowers during loan settlement.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued guidelines for banks, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and other regulated entities to address the issues faced by the borrowers and towards promoting responsible lending conduct among such entities.

14. Centre launches three game-changing initiatives for farmers focusing on agri-credit and crop insurance

- Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Finance Minister & Shri Narendra Singh Tomar, Union Agriculture Minister and jointly unveil KCC Ghar Ghar Abhiyaan, Kisan Rin Portal and WINDS manual Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman assures full cooperation of banks for success of Ghar Ghar KCC Abhiyan
- Smt. Sitharaman appreciated real time estimation for rice and wheat crop output and called for the estimation to be extended to Dalhan and Tilhan crops.

15.EPFO records the highest payroll addition with 18.75 lakh net members during the month of July, 2023

- The Employee Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) added 18.75 lakh net members in July, according to the latest data from the ministry of labour and employment. During the month under review, 10.27 lakh new members have

been enrolled, which is highest since July 2022. Majority of new members joining EPFO are in the age group of 18-25 years, constituting 58.45% of total new members' additions during the month.

- This shows an increasing trend in youth enrollment, who are mostly first-time job seekers joining the organized sector workforce of the country. The Employee's Pension Scheme (EPS) was introduced in 1995. The scheme, administered by the EPFO, provides employees with a pension after they reach the age of 58.

16. Bank of Baroda Unveils Festive Campaign “BOB Ke Sang Tyohaar Ki Umang”

- Bank of Baroda announced the start of the “BOB Ke Sang Tyohaar Ki Umang” holiday campaign, which would last through December 31, 2023. The launch of 4 new savings accounts from Bank of Baroda, together with enticing interest rate promotions on loans for homes, cars, people, and education, are among the company's festival offers.
- The launch of 4 new savings accounts from Bank of Baroda, together with enticing interest rate promotions on loans for homes, cars, people, and education, are among the company's festival offers which has been launched in BOB's festive season campaign “BOB Ke Sang Tyohaar Ki Umang”.

17. Yes Bank partners with Juspay to launch HyperUPI

- Juspay, India's largest payments firm, collaborated with YES Bank to introduce HyperUPI, the NPCI plug-in SDK that enables in-app UPI payments in merchant apps. Without becoming an approved UPI app, merchants can now offer easy “1-click UPI experiences” via their Android and iOS apps. Customers will no longer need to rely on another app to complete UPI transactions because these payments may now be completed on the merchant's app. This plugin SDK is based on one of the most reputable cloud UPI systems in the country, and it supports UPI payments for top UPI merchant and consumer applications.
- Traditional UPI payments in merchant applications require many clicks, increasing the likelihood that customers may quit the payment process. The UPI Plug-in SDK, on the other hand, reduces the payment experience to a single click. This optimised method results in a four-fold increase in transaction speed and 90%+ success rates for retailers.

18. Indian Bank unveils 'IB SAATHI' to enhance banking services

- Public sector Indian Bank on Saturday announced roll out of 'IB SAATHI' initiative aimed at providing an integrated ecosystem for all stakeholders in the financial sector through the business correspondent route.
- The IB Sustainable Access and Aligning Technology for Holistic Inclusion (SAATHI) offers an enhanced user experience through the simplified delivery of services, encompassing both basic and value-added offerings to customers.

19. ADB predicts 6.5 percent GDP growth for Bangladesh in FY 2024

- The Asian Development Bank has projected Bangladesh's gross domestic product growth to be 6.5 percent in the financial year 2024, compared with an estimated growth of 6 per cent in FY23. The growth forecast reflected an improvement in domestic demand and better export growth due to economic recovery in the Eurozone.
- The ADB also mentioned that inflation in Bangladesh was projected to ease from 9 per cent in FY23 to 6.6 per cent in FY24. The main risk to this growth projection is a further deterioration in export growth if global demand is weaker than expected.

SCIENCE TECH & DEFENCE

1. India has decided to procure 12 Sukhoi Su-30 MKIs

- The Ministry of Defence approved the proposal for the procurement of 12 Sukhoi Su-30 MKIs for the Indian Air Force which would be manufactured in India by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. The project worth Rs 11,000 crore will include the aircraft and related ground systems. According to Defence officials these Su-30 MKI would include more than 60 per cent indigenous content as per need and would be the most modern Sukhoi aircraft of the Indian Air Force.
- The decision taken during the meeting of Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh approved nine capital acquisition proposals worth Rs 45,000 crore. For the nine capital acquisition proposals, the DAC accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) and the AoN for acquiring 12 Su-30 MKI aircraft was also accorded.

2. India annual Naval Maritime Bilateral Exercise between Indian Navy & Republic of Singapore Navy starts

- Navies of India and Singapore have begun a week-long bilateral maritime exercise, SIMBEX, in the southern parts of the South China Sea for which the two countries have deployed a submarine each. Indian Navy's Rajput-class destroyer INS Ranvijay, Kamorta-class corvette INS Kavaratti, and a P-8I maritime patrol aircraft are taking part in the three-decade-old annual exercise. Warships from the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) taking part in the exercise include the two Formidable-class frigates RSS Stalwart and RSS Tenacious.
- At the opening ceremony of the bilateral exercise, RSN's Fleet Commander Colonel (COL) Kwan Hon Chuong and India's Eastern Naval Command Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief Vice Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar unveiled the commemorative logo of its 30th edition.

3. Sahasra Electronic to Introduce India's First Locally Manufactured Desktop Motherboard

- Noida-based Sahasra Electronic Solutions, a part of Sahasra Group, plans to bring its first Made-in-India computer motherboard to the market in November. The motherboard, which will be designed around the latest Intel 13th generation chipset, is currently undergoing trials. We are the first company who has designed the motherboard in India.
- They were either being designed in China or Taiwan,” Manwani told Fe. The group’s semiconductor business has also started production of the first Made-in-India memory chips. Sahasra Semiconductor, its chip-making business, is a part of the Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors (SPECS), under which it is eligible for 25% financial incentive on capital expenditure.

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4. Aditya Birla Finance participates in OCEN to launch Instant Purchase Order financing for MSMEs on GeM Sahay.

- Aditya Birla Finance Ltd (“ABFL”), the lending subsidiary of Aditya Birla Capital Ltd. (ABCL), announced its participation in Open Credit Enablement Network (OCEN) by launching instant Purchase Order (PO) financing for MSMEs registered on Government e-Marketplace (GeM) Sahay platform. This will be an entirely digital and instant process, where sellers can access working capital finance against their purchase orders, ensuring swift and hassle-free disbursements.
- With participation in OCEN, ABFL facilitates the growth and development of MSMEs by providing them with seamless access to credit to meet their working capital requirements. OCEN is a decentralized open credit network developed by the non-profit think tank iSPIRT foundation as a digital public infrastructure. It allows the flow of credit between borrowers and lenders under a common set of standards.

BOOKS & AWARDS

1. 84 artists conferred with the Sangeet Natak Akademi Amrit Awards

- Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar bestowed the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Amrit Awards upon 84 distinguished artists representing various domains within the performing arts. In a momentous ceremony, presented the one-time Sangeet Natak Akademi Amrit Awards to 84 distinguished artistes

from various realms of the performing arts. The significance of these awards lies in their aim to honor Indian artists aged above 75 years, who, despite their remarkable contributions, have not received any national recognition in their illustrious careers thus far.

- The list includes three artists from Andhra Pradesh, two from Arunachal Pradesh, and six from Maharashtra. Furthermore, three recipients each hailed from Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. Additionally, two artists each from Punjab and Delhi also received recognition.

SPORTS

1. IndiGo becomes official airline for Indian football team

- IndiGo has embarked on a partnership with the All-India Football Federation (AIFF). IndiGo now stands as the global partner and official airline for the Indian Football Team. Football is among the three most popular sports in India, both in terms of player participation and TV viewership, making this partnership between IndiGo and the AIFF even more significant.
- The Indian National Football Team players hail from diverse regions of the country, each with its unique culture, and are brought together by team spirit and a shared passion for football. Just like that, "India by IndiGo" reflects a dynamic and ever-expanding network, a vital thread that connects these players from all parts of India. This partnership not only leverages IndiGo's extensive network across the country but also harnesses the airline's global network.

2. Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra finishes second in men's event at Diamond League Final in Eugene, US

- Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra finished second in the men's event at the Diamond League Final in Eugene, Oregon, USA. The Indian's best throw of 83.80 meters came in his second attempt. However, Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch, won his third title with a best throw of 84.24 meters.
- Reigning Olympic and world champion Chopra, who holds the Indian national record of 89.94 meters, won a world championship silver medal at the same venue last year with an 88.13-meter effort.
- Earlier this month, Chopra, who won India's first-ever gold at the World Athletics Championships, failed to defend his Diamond League title, falling just short of Jakub Vadlejch 85.86 meter again, who took home the trophy. Next, he will defend his title at the Asian Games 2023 starting in Hangzhou later this month.

3. Ferrari's Carlos Sainz wins F1 Singapore Grand Prix to end Red Bull's run

- Ferrari's Carlos Sainz won the Singapore Grand Prix on Sunday (Sep 17) to end Formula 1 leader Max Verstappen's record run of 10 wins in a row and shatter Red Bull's dream of going through the season unbeaten. McLaren's Lando

Norris finished a close second and Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton took third place as Red Bull ended up off the podium for the first time since last November's Brazilian Grand Prix.

- In a strategic, slow-burning thriller of a race, Sainz - nicknamed "smooth operator" - played his hand perfectly after starting on the pole, slowing the field to close any safety car window and saving his tyres before helping former teammate Norris stave off the chasing Mercedes pair.

4. Germany beat Serbia to win first-ever FIBA Basketball World Cup

- Germany beat Serbia 83-77 to lift basketball's 2023 FIBA World Cup. Germany went 8-0 in the tournament, becoming the fifth consecutive World Cup champion to go unbeaten. The tournament most valuable player Dennis Schroder carried Germany with a game-high 28 points, way above his average of 17.9 points per game, and added two rebounds and two assists.
- Serbia absorbed another heartbreak after losing to the United States 129-92 in the 2014 final, but finished better than their quarter-final exit in 2019. Earlier, Canada bagged their first World Cup podium finish at the expense of short-handed United States 127-118 in overtime in a riveting, record-setting bronze-medal game. The 19th edition of FIBA's flagship event, co-hosted by the Philippines, Indonesia and Japan, on a high note.

OBITUARY

1. Renowned Writer Gita Mehta Passes Away

- Renowned writer-filmmaker and author Gita Mehta, sister of Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, passed away on Saturday in New Delhi.
- Her coverage of Bangladesh's 1971 liberation war for NBC and her acclaimed documentary "Dateline Bangladesh" is what she is most well-known for. Mehta, who died at the age of 80, is survived by her son. Her husband, renowned American publisher late Sonny Mehta, predeceased her.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. World Patient Safety Day is observed every year on 17th September

- World Patient Safety Day 2023 is celebrated every year on 17 September to spread awareness around the world about patient safety. It is the duty of doctors to take care and protect patients. The doctor is no less than a god for the patient. In such a situation, World Patient Safety Day is celebrated every year on 17 September to spread awareness around the world regarding patient safety. This day is celebrated with great pomp every year by patients, doctors and healthcare providers around the world.

- The theme of World Patient Safety Day for the year 2023 is **Engaging Patients for Patient Safety**. In such a situation, all healthcare providers are also asked to be included in this day. Last year, the theme “Medication safety” is selected for the World Patient Safety Day 2022. This theme varies with World Patient Safety Day 2023 slogan “**Elevate the voice of Patients.**”

2. World Ozone Day is observed every year on 16th September

- The delicate ozone layer is a shield of gas that protects our planet from harmful parts of the Sun’s radiation, playing an important role in preserving life on Earth. September 16 this year is celebrated as Ozone Day under the theme “Montreal Protocol: Fixing the ozone layer and reducing climate change.”
- The ozone layer is on track to recover completely within the next four decades, thanks to the global phaseout of ozone-depleting chemicals. A panel of experts backed by the United Nations confirmed this during research presented at the American Meteorological Society’s 103rd annual meeting in January.

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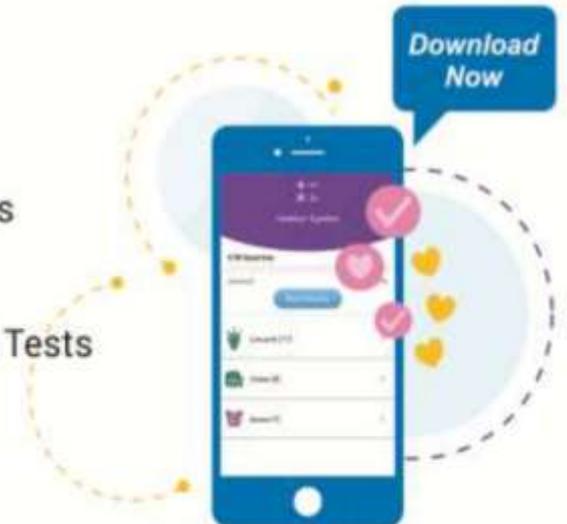
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