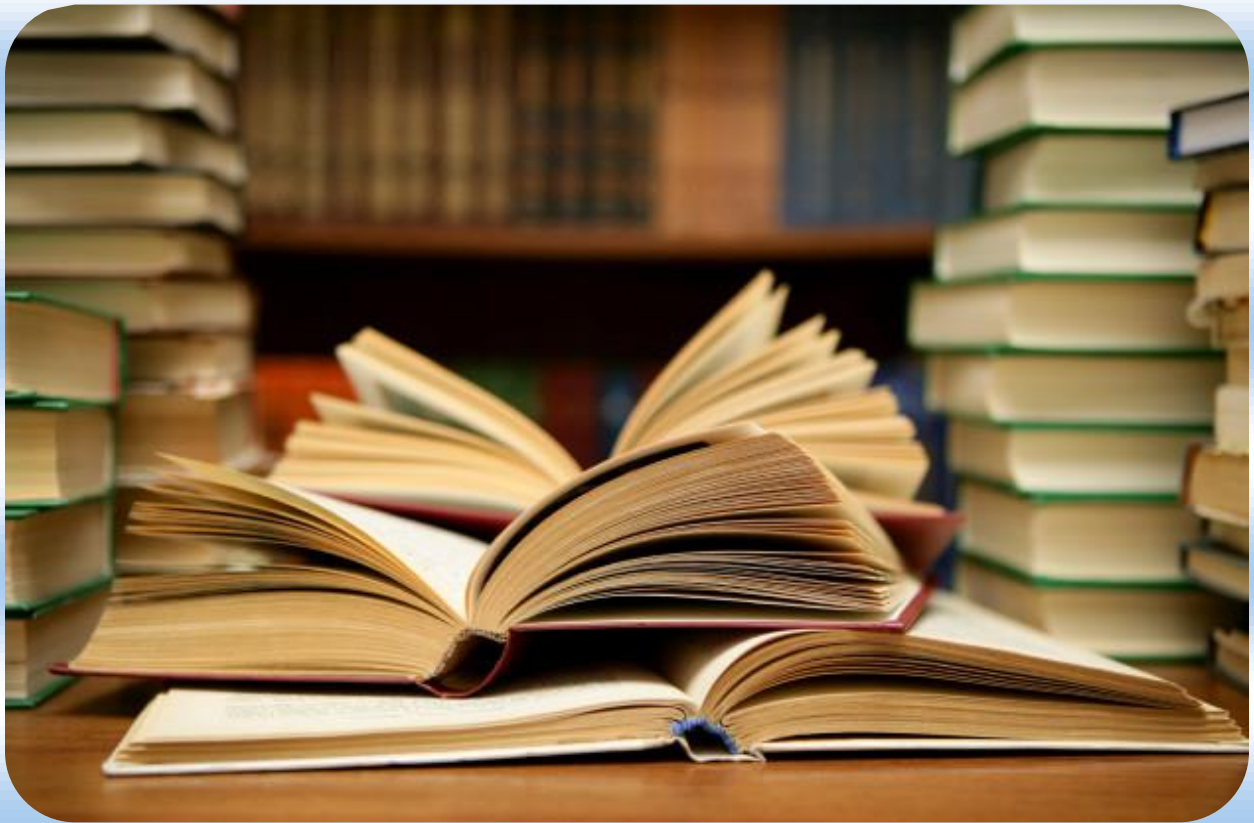


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GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



AUGUST-2024

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Indian Armed Forces Gets the First Woman Director General of Medical Service (ARMY)

NEW DELHI: Lt Gen Sadhna Saxena Nair has become the first woman to be appointed as the Director General Medical Services (Army). She has other firsts to her name: she was the first woman to hold the post of DG Hospital Services (Armed Forces) on promotion to the rank of Air Marshal.



Insurtech Startup Covrzy Secures IRDAI Broking License

Bengaluru-based Bizcovr Insurance Broking which runs Covrzy has secured a direct broking (general) licence from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). This enables Covrzy to operate as an insurance broker in India, offering a full spectrum of business insurance solutions for its users.



UGRO Capital and SIDBI Forge Co-Lending Partnership

UGRO Capital, a data-tech non-banking financial company (NBFC) has entered into a co-lending partnership with Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) for lending to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The partnership is in accordance with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) co-lending framework, designed to leverage the strengths of banks and NBFCs to boost priority-sector lending.

Index of Eight Core Industries for June 2024

The combined Index of Eight Core Industries (ICI) increased by 4.0 per cent (provisional) in June, 2024 as compared to the Index in June, 2023. The production of Coal, Electricity, Natural Gas, Steel, Fertilizer and Cement recorded positive growth in June 2024. The final growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for March 2024 stands at 6.3 per cent. The cumulative growth rate of ICI during April to June, 2024-25 was 5.7 per cent (provisional) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

ADB Provides \$200 Million Loan for Solid Waste Management in India

Asian Development Bank and the Government of India recently signed a \$ 200 million (about Rs 1,700 crore) loan to improve solid waste management and sanitation in 100 cities across eight states in the country. The signatories to the loan agreement for the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 -Comprehensive Municipal Waste Management in Indian Cities Program were Juhi Mukherjee, Joint Secretary, Finance Ministry, and Mio Oka, Country Director for Asian Development Bank (ADB) - India Resident Mission, the Manila-based multilateral funding agency said in a statement on Tuesday.

Swapnil Kusale Secures Bronze Medal in 50m Rifle 3 Positions at Paris Olympics

Swapnil Kusale clinched the bronze medal in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions event at the Paris Olympics shooting competition on Thursday. India has won three medals at the 2024 Summer Games so far, all bronze, by shooters. Kusale's first-ever Olympic bronze in the 50m rifle 3 positions event took the country's overall medal tally to three at the ongoing Paris Games.



India Elected Vice-Chair of IPEF's Supply Chain Council

India has been elected as vice-chair of the supply chain council, one of the three bodies set up by the 14-member Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) bloc, the commerce and industry ministry said Wednesday. The council was set up under the IPEF Supply Chain Resilience Agreement, which aims to help mitigate risks of economic disruptions from supply chain shocks, improve crisis coordination, and reduce the member countries' dependence on China.

Rapido Becomes Unicorn with Fresh \$120 Million Funding

Ride-hailing startup Rapido has raised a funding of \$120 million Capital in its latest Series E funding round led by its existing investor WestBridge, thus making it the latest company to join the coveted unicorn club. The investor poured in the fresh capital through three of its related entities – Setu AIF Trust, Konark Trust, and MMPL Trust, as per regulatory filings.



India's Fiscal Deficit Declines to 8.1% of Full-Year Estimate in Q1 FY25

A sharp reduction in capital expenditure (capex) during election months and record-high dividend from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) led to a decrease in the central government's fiscal deficit to 8.41 per cent of the full-year target for the April-June quarter (Q1) of 2024-25 (FY25), according to the latest data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) on Wednesday, along with the most recent FY25 Budget figures. However, CGA data, which uses Interim Budget figures, shows the Centre's fiscal deficit stood at 8.1 per cent in Q1FY25.

PM Marks 5 Years of Abrogation of Articles 370 and 35(A)

On the completion of five years since the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35(A), Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said it was the start of a new era of progress and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. In a post on social media platform X (formerly Twitter), Prime Minister Narendra Modi said: "Today we mark 5 years since the Parliament of India decided to abrogate Articles 370 and 35(A), a watershed moment in our nation's history. It was the start of a new era of progress and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

RIL Jumps Up 2 Places in Fortune's Global 500 List for 2024

Oil-to-telecom-to-retail conglomerate Reliance Industries Ltd continues to be the highest-ranked Indian firm on the Fortune Global 500 list, jumping two places to be ranked at No.86 in the 2024 ranking. The firm was placed at No.88 in last year's ranking and has gained a whopping 69 places in the last three years - from being placed at No.155 in 2021 to being at No.86 in 2024. Releasing the 2024 list, Fortune on its website said Reliance has been on the 500 list for 21 years now. It had revenues of \$ 108.8 billion and a profit of \$ 8.4 billion last year.

Tata Group Unveils ₹27,000 Crore Semiconductor Facility in Assam

At the Tata Group's ₹27,000-crore greenfield semiconductor assembly and test facility in Assam, which is expected to be operationalised by next year, around 15 billion chips will be packaged annually for customers globally. For India's first indigenous facility for assembly and testing of semiconductor chips, the Bhoomi Pujan ceremony was performed on Saturday. The chips, which will be packaged at the Jagiroad facility in Assam, will power electric vehicles, healthcare devices, mobile phones, laptops, and other key products of leading global companies around the world.

Madras High Court Strikes Down Section 77-A of Registration Act as Unconstitutional

The Madras High Court on Friday declared as unconstitutional Section 77-A of the Registration Act, 1908, on the ground that it conferred excessive quasi-judicial power on the District Registrars to cancel documents related to any immovable property in the State if they were found to have been registered through fraud or on submission of forged revenue records.



Government Appoints Challa Sreenivasulu Setty as SBI Chairman

Challa Sreenivasulu Setty on Wednesday assumed charge as Chairman of the country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI). He succeeds Dinesh Khara, who superannuated from services of the bank at the closing of business hours on Tuesday, SBI said in a regulatory filing. Prior to becoming chairman, Setty was the senior-most managing director of the bank. As per the convention, the chairman is appointed from a pool of serving managing directors of SBI. Usually, the senior-most managing director becomes chairman of the bank.

Govt Reverses Decision: Indexation Benefits Restored for LTCG Tax

In response to widespread criticism, the government has decided to roll back its controversial Budget proposal to remove indexation benefits on long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax from the sale of unlisted assets. Taxpayers now have the option to pay LTCG tax at a rate of 20 per cent with indexation benefit or at a new rate of 12.5 per cent without indexation benefit for properties acquired before July 23, 2024, as per amendments moved in the Finance Bill. Taxpayers are expected to choose the option resulting in the lower tax amount.

Deloitte India Predicts Economic Growth Between 7% and 7.2% in FY25

India's economy is expected to grow at 7-7.2 per cent in the current fiscal year driven by robust economic fundamentals and continuity in domestic policy reforms, Deloitte India said on Monday. The August update of Deloitte's India Economic Outlook said several initiatives in the Union Budget 2024-25 toward improving agriculture productivity, creating jobs for the youth, and in manufacturing and addressing the challenge of access to finance for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

RBI Hikes UPI Limit for Tax Payments to Rs 5 Lakh per Transaction

In a move aimed at boosting digital payments and facilitating larger transactions, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday increased the upper limit for tax payments through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) to Rs 5 lakh per transaction from the current Rs 1 lakh limit. Previously capped at Rs 1 lakh, the enhanced limit is expected to provide convenience to taxpayers, especially for high-value transactions.

RBI Shortens Frequency of Credit Reporting to Fortnightly

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said on Thursday it is shortening the frequency of reporting by banks to Credit Information Companies (CICs) from once a month to once a fortnight. The move aims to improve timeliness and accuracy of credit information available to lenders. "The fortnightly reporting frequency would ensure that credit information reports provided by CICs reflect more recent information. This will be beneficial to both borrowers and lenders (CIs).

Pine Labs-owned Setu Launches UPISetu in Partnership with Axis Bank

Pine Labs-owned Setu, an application programming interface (API) infrastructure provider, introduced a Unified Payments Interface (UPI)-focused payments platform for businesses and developers in partnership with Axis Bank. The platform, named UPISetu, supports a wide range of UPI products, from basic QR code payments, UPI Autopay, equated monthly instalments (EMIs), and third-party validation service.

Odisha Launches India's First 'Rice ATM'

NEW DELHI: India's first round-the-clock grain ATM was inaugurated on Thursday at Mancheswar in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The ATM, named Annapurti Grain ATM, was unveiled by Odisha's minister for Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare, Krushna Chandra Patra in the presence of Nozomi Hashimoto, deputy country director of the World Food Programme in India. This initiative aims to enhance nutritional security in the state by providing 24x7 access to rice and wheat.

Bharti Global to Acquire 24.5% Stake in BT Group

Bharti Enterprises, led by billionaire Sunil Bharti Mittal, will buy a 24.5% stake in British Telecom Group Plc, the UK's largest mobile and broadband services provider, the companies said in a statement Monday. Bharti Televentures UK Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Bharti Enterprises's international investment arm Bharti Global, will buy the equity from telecom services provider Altice UK, which has a 24.5% stake in BT. Bharti Televentures will buy 9.99% of BT from Altice immediately, and the remaining 14.51% after receiving regulatory clearances.

L&T Finance Achieves NBFC-ICC Status from RBI

The subsidiaries involved in this consolidation include L&T Finance, L&T Infra Credit Ltd., and L&T Mutual Fund Trustee Ltd. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) granted the new certificate of registration on August 2, 2024. This transition reflects L&T Finance Ltd.'s strategic move to streamline operations under the NBFC-ICC framework, which is not expected to impact the company's compliance with existing regulatory guidelines. In terms of financial performance, L&T Finance Ltd. reported a record net profit of ₹685 crore for the first quarter of FY25, marking a 29% year-on-year increase.

Government Reduces Crude Oil Tax, Eliminates Diesel and ATF Levies

The central government has reduced the windfall tax on petroleum crude to Rs 2,100 per metric tonne, down from Rs 4,600 per tonne, effective August 17. Earlier, on July 31, the windfall tax on crude was cut by 34.2 per cent to Rs 4,600 per tonne.



Net FDI Rises to \$6.9 Billion in Q1 FY25

Net foreign direct investment (FDI) during the April-June period of the current financial year was \$6.9 billion, compared to \$4.7 billion in the year-ago period, the latest data released by the Reserve Bank of India showed. The increase was due to an improvement in gross inward FDI, which grew by 26.4 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y) to \$22.5 billion during Q1 of 2024-25. Manufacturing, financial services, communication services, computer services, and electricity and other energy sectors accounted for about 80 per cent of the gross FDI inflows.

Amul Tops Global Food Brand Rankings in 2024

Amul, a company with over seven decades of history, has been recognised as the world's strongest food brand in Brand Finance's Global Food & Drinks Report 2024. The report highlights Amul's impressive Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 91 out of 100, earning it an AAA+ rating. Amul's brand value saw an 11 per cent increase from 2023, reaching \$3.3 billion in the latest ranking. The brand value, however, should not be confused with turnover.

NCLT Approves Slice-North East Small Finance Bank Merger

Consumer payments and lending company Slice on Monday said it has received approval from the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) for its merger with North East Small Finance Bank (NESFB). The NCLT Guwahati bench has sanctioned the scheme of arrangement and amalgamation involving Garagepreneurs Internet Pvt Ltd, Quadrillion Finance Pvt Ltd, Intergalactory Foundry Pvt Ltd, RGVN (North East) Microfinance Ltd, and North East Small Finance Bank, the company said in a statement.

Zomato Acquires Paytm's Entertainment Ticketing Business

Food delivery giant Zomato on Wednesday completed the acquisition of fintech major Paytm's entertainment ticketing business, Paytm Insider, both the companies said in regulatory filings.



Neeraj Chopra Finishes Second in Lausanne Diamond League

India's ace javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra finished 2nd at the Lausanne Diamond League event in Switzerland. He achieved his season-best throw of 89.49 meters during the competition. As per Olympics.com, Chopra missed the 90m mark by just 51cm. In the competition, Anderson Peters of Grenada claimed the first place with a remarkable throw of 90.61 meters, setting a new record. Germany's Julian Weber took third place with a throw of 87.08 meters. Peters had previously won bronze at the Paris Olympics 2024.

India's Population to Peak at 1.7 Billion by 2060s Before Declining: UN Report

India's population will most likely peak at 1.7 billion in the early 2060s and is projected to decline after that by 12 per cent. However, according to UN estimates, India will remain the world's most populous country for the entire century, newswire *PTI* reported on Friday, July 12.



PM Modi Presents BHISHM Cubes to Ukraine

India on Friday (August 23) donated four Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita & Maitri (BHISHM) Cubes, "mobile hospitals" designed to provide emergency medical care, to Ukraine. Prime Minister Narendra Modi shared on the social media platform 'X' that the BHISHM is a distinctive initiative that will deliver medical facilities in a swiftly deployable format.



Bandhan Bank Launches Avni Savings Account for Women

Bandhan Bank has launched a new savings account named 'Avni,' specifically designed for women. The Avni savings account aims to empower women by offering personalised financial and lifestyle solutions, along with a host of attractive benefits. "The success of Bandhan Bank is deeply rooted in our women customers. Bandhan was established with the goal of empowering women.

GAIL and Petron to Establish 500 KTA Bio-Ethylene Plant in India

GAIL (India) Limited and Petron Scientech Inc signed a Memorandum of Understanding on August 21, 2024, to explore setting up a 500 KTA bio-ethylene plant in India. The proposed project, based on bio-ethanol, would be a 50:50 joint venture. The companies will conduct feasibility studies to assess technical viability and financial prospects before seeking investment approval from their respective managements.

Mumbai Ranks 2nd, New Delhi 3rd In Global Property Price Index

Mumbai and Delhi are at the second and third positions, respectively, among 44 cities globally in annual price rise of prime residential properties during the June quarter, Knight Frank said in a report.



Shikhar Dhawan Announces Retirement from International Cricket

Indian better Shikhar Dhawan announced his retirement from international and domestic cricket on Saturday. The 38-year-old conveyed his decision through a video posted on social media. He has not featured for the Indian men's national team since playing in an ODI match against Bangladesh in 2022.



India Launches World's First Mobile Hybrid Rocket: RHUMI-1

Tamil Nadu-based space startup Space Zone India has launched the country's first hybrid reusable rocket - Rhumi 1 onboard a mobile platform from Pattipulam in Chengalpattu district to take up research on atmospheric conditions.



India Welcomes First Civilian Space Tourist Gopichand Thotakura

Captain Gopichand Thotakura, India's first civilian space tourist, met Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankar on Monday. He recently travelled to space as part of the crew for Amazon founder Jeff Bezos' space company Blue Origin's New Shepard-25 (NS-25) mission.



Ladakh Gets Five New District

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has announced the creation of five new districts in the union territory Ladakh, Union Minister Amit Shah said on Monday. The newly established districts are Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra, and Changthang, following which the government expects improvement in the delivery of public services and bring government initiatives closer to the residents of these remote areas.

Piramal Finance and Central Bank of India Partner to Reach Underserved Markets

Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Limited and Central Bank of India have announced on Friday a strategic partnership to expand their co-lending business. The collaboration will provide loans to middle and low-income borrowers, focusing on middle and low-income segment borrowers with focus on rural and semi-urban regions, Piramal Finance said in a press note.

Indian Prodigy Triumphs at Asian U-15 Junior Badminton Championships 2024

Thirteen-year-old Tanvi Patri from Odisha has cemented her status as one of India's most promising badminton prodigies by clinching the girls' singles title at the U-15 Badminton Asia U-17 & U-15 Junior Championships in Chengdu, China, the country where she first honed her skills in the sport.



Jay Shah Elected as New International Cricket Council Chairman

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI: Indian cricket board's incumbent secretary Jay Shah on Tuesday became the youngest Independent chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC). Shah, 35, was elected unopposed after current chairman Greg Barclaefused to seek a third term. He is the fifth Indian after Jagmohan Dalmiya, Sharad Pawar, N Srinivasan and Shashank Manohar to be elected to this high-profile position.

Bharti Airtel Announces Content Partnership with Apple

Amid growing viewership for large screen video content, Indian telco Bharti Airtel on Tuesday announced a strategic partnership with Apple, with a focus to bring best of entertainment to its customers in India with new, exclusive offers for Apple TV+ and Apple Music. As part of the latest pact, Airtel Xstream customers can now explore the best of Hollywood and award-winning content on Apple TV+ included with premium Airtel WiFi and Postpaid plans, the telco said.

Amazon Launches Rufus: A New Era in AI-Powered Shopping Assistance

Amazon is introducing its generative AI chatbot Rufus to India-based customers soon, as the e-commerce giant seeks to make the new Gen AI technology a crucial part of its operations. Rufus is a “new generative AI-powered conversational shopping assistant,” according to Amazon, that can help shoppers get product recommendations, access shopping list advice, understand their requirements, compare product categories, get gift ideas for special occasions, or see what other customers have said in response to their specific questions.

Pakistani Christian Becomes First Goan to Obtain Indian Citizenship Under CAA

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Wednesday (August 28, 2024) handed over the Indian citizenship certificate to a 78-year-old Pakistani Christian under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, making him the first such person from the coastal state. Joseph Francis Pereira went from Goa to Pakistan for studies before liberation and subsequently took up a job there. He attained Pakistani citizenship and lived in Karachi before returning to India in 2013.



Infosys And NVIDIA Revolutionize Telecom with GenAI Solutions

Infosys on Thursday said it has expanded its partnership with American chipmaker Nvidia to develop GenAI-powered solutions for telecom operators. The IT major has developed three generative AI solutions powered by its AI-offering Topaz, which make use of Nvidia NIM inference microservices, Nvidia NeMo Retriever embedding models, and NeMo Guardrails to customise and deploy generative AI telco domain-specific large-language models.



Union Minister Launches SHe-Box Portal to Enhance Workplace Safety for Women

The ministry said the portal would function as a centralised repository for information related to internal committees and local committees across the country. Credit: DH File Photo New Delhi: Union Women and Child Development Minister Annapurna Devi on Thursday launched a centralised platform designed to make workplaces safer for women by addressing and managing complaints of sexual harassment.



Cabinet Approves Setting Up of 12 Industrial Smart Cities In 10 States

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has greenlit the development of 12 industrial smart cities across six major industrial corridors in 10 states, with an estimated investment of Rs 28,602 crore. These projects are designed to attract substantial investments, with expectations of approximately Rs 1.52 trillion from both large anchor industries and MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises). This initiative is projected to generate 1 million direct and 3 million indirect jobs.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Nelson Mandela Legacy Sites Inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage

Johannesburg: President Cyril Ramaphosa has welcomed the listing of several iconic sites in South Africa linked to the late President Nelson Mandela as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Listed generically as 'The Human Rights, Liberation and Reconciliation: Nelson Mandela Legacy Sites' by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), these include 14 human rights and liberation struggle sites linked to Mandela, who served 27 years as a political prisoner before becoming South Africa's first democratically elected President after decades of white minority apartheid rule.

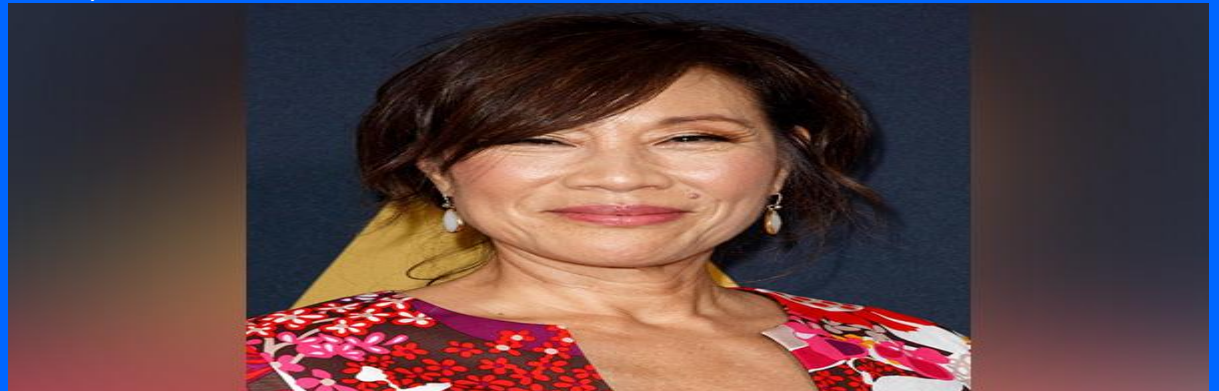
President Murmu's Six-Day Visit to Fiji, New Zealand, and Timor-Leste

President Droupadi Murmu on Sunday left for a six-day visit to Fiji, New Zealand and Timor-Leste. According to officials, she will visit Fiji from August 5-7 at the invitation of its President Wiliame Maivalili Katonivere. Murmu will hold bilateral meetings with Fiji's Katonivere and Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka.



Janet Yang Re-Elected Film Academy's President

Washington [US], August 2 (ANI): Film producer Janet Yang has been re-elected as the president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for a third time, reported Variety.



Novak Djokovic Clinches First Olympic Gold Medal at the Paris 2024 Olympics

Even as Novak Djokovic's era of dominance touched every other significant tournament in the world, as he swept up every grand slam title, all Masters 1000 events and compiled more weeks at No 1 than any other player in the sport's history, the Olympics remained a void that he just could not fill.



Star Shooter Manu Bhaker Set to be India's Flagbearer in Closing Ceremony

India's two-time Olympic bronze medallist Manu Bhaker is set to be India's flagbearer in the closing ceremony of the Paris Olympics. The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) sources stated that Bhaker will be India's women's flagbearer in the closing ceremony. India's men's flagbearer for the ceremony is yet to be confirmed.



Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus to Lead Bangladesh Interim Government

Nobel Peace Prize-winning economist Muhammad Yunus has returned to Bangladesh to head an interim government after weeks of student-led protests forced Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to resign and flee to India.



China to Launch Satellite Constellation to Rival Musk's Starlink

A Chinese state-owned enterprise on Tuesday successfully placed 18 satellites into orbit, state broadcaster CCTV reported, as China seeks to create its own version of U.S. firm SpaceX's Starlink network. The launch of the low Earth orbit (LEO) satellites by Shanghai Spacecom Satellite Technology (SSST) took place at Taiyuan Satellite Launch Centre in the northern Shanxi province. The satellites were carried aboard a Long March 6 rocket and represent the first batch in SSST's "Thousand Sails Constellation" plan, CCTV reported.

Vinesh Phogat Disqualified in Paris Olympic 2024

In a heartbreaking turn of events, Vinesh Phogat has been disqualified from the Paris 2024 Olympics wrestling competition for being overweight in the women's 50kg category on the morning of her gold medal bout on Wednesday. At Paris 2024, each weight category is organised over two competition days. The medical control and weigh-in for each category takes place in the morning of the first competition day. On the second competition day, wrestlers who have qualified for the finals and repechage are weighed in again.

DBS Appoints Tan Su Shan as First Female CEO

DBS Group said on Wednesday that Tan Su Shan, the firm's head of institutional banking, will succeed Chief Executive Piyush Gupta upon his retirement in March, making her the first female CEO of Singapore's biggest bank. Tan, who joined the bank in 2010, will serve as the deputy CEO till then, DBS said in a statement. CEO Piyush Gupta retires on 28 March 2025, when the bank hosts its next annual general meeting.

Neeraj Chopra Clinches Silver in Javelin at Paris 2024 Olympics

Neeraj Chopra of India secured silver in the men's javelin throw at the Paris 2024 Olympics. Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem won gold with an Olympic record throw of 92.97m and Anderson Peters of Grenada earned bronze.



UPI Merchant Transactions in Nepal Cross 100000 Milestone

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) Person-to-Merchant (P2M) transactions in Nepal have surpassed the 100,000 mark, announced NPCI International Payments (NIPL), the global arm of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). This achievement follows NIPL's collaboration with Fonepay, Nepal's largest payment network, to introduce cross-border UPI P2M acceptance in March 2024. The milestone reflects growing digital payment connectivity between India and Nepal.

"King Khan" Receives Lifetime Award at Locarno Film Festival

Locarno [Switzerland]: Shah Rukh Khan added another achievement to his illustrious career. On August 10, he became the first Indian personality to be honoured with a lifetime achievement award, the so-called Pardo alla Carriera, or Career Leopard at the 77th edition of the Locarno Film Festival.



China Tests Largest Cargo Drone as Low-Altitude Economy Expands

China flew its biggest-yet unmanned cargo aircraft designed for civilian use, as the world's top drone-making nation steps up test flights of autonomous aerial vehicles (UAVs) that could ultimately ferry everything from takeouts to people. Packing a payload capacity of 2 metric tons, the twin-engine aircraft took off on Sunday on an inaugural flight, state media said, citing developer Sichuan Tengden Sci-tech Innovation Co., for a trip of about 20 minutes in southwestern Sichuan province.



China Approves \$31 Billion for 11 New Nuclear Reactors Across Five Sites

China approved 11 nuclear reactors across five sites on Monday, a record amount of permits as the government leans even more heavily on atomic energy to support its push to cut emissions. The State Council greenlighted the new reactors in sites spread across Jiangsu, Shandong, Guangdong, Zhejiang and Guangxi, state-run China Energy News reported. The total investment for all 11 units will be at least 220 billion yuan (\$31 billion) with construction taking about five years, according to financial publication Jiemian.

SpaceX's Polaris Dawn Mission: The First Private Spacewalk

SpaceX has postponed its attempt to launch an expedition featuring an all-civilian crew that is aiming to carry out the first-ever spacewalk by private citizens. The mission, known as Polaris Dawn, had been scheduled to take off from Nasa's space centre in Florida early on Wednesday morning.



Typhoon Shanshan Makes Landfall on Japan's Kyushu Island

Japan's strongest typhoon of the year has made landfall in the country's south-west, bringing torrential rain and winds of up to 252 km/h (157 mph), strong enough to destroy homes. The meteorological agency said Typhoon Shanshan, referred to in Japan as Typhoon No 10, made landfall on the island of Kyushu at around 8am. The power company said 254,610 houses were already without electricity.



