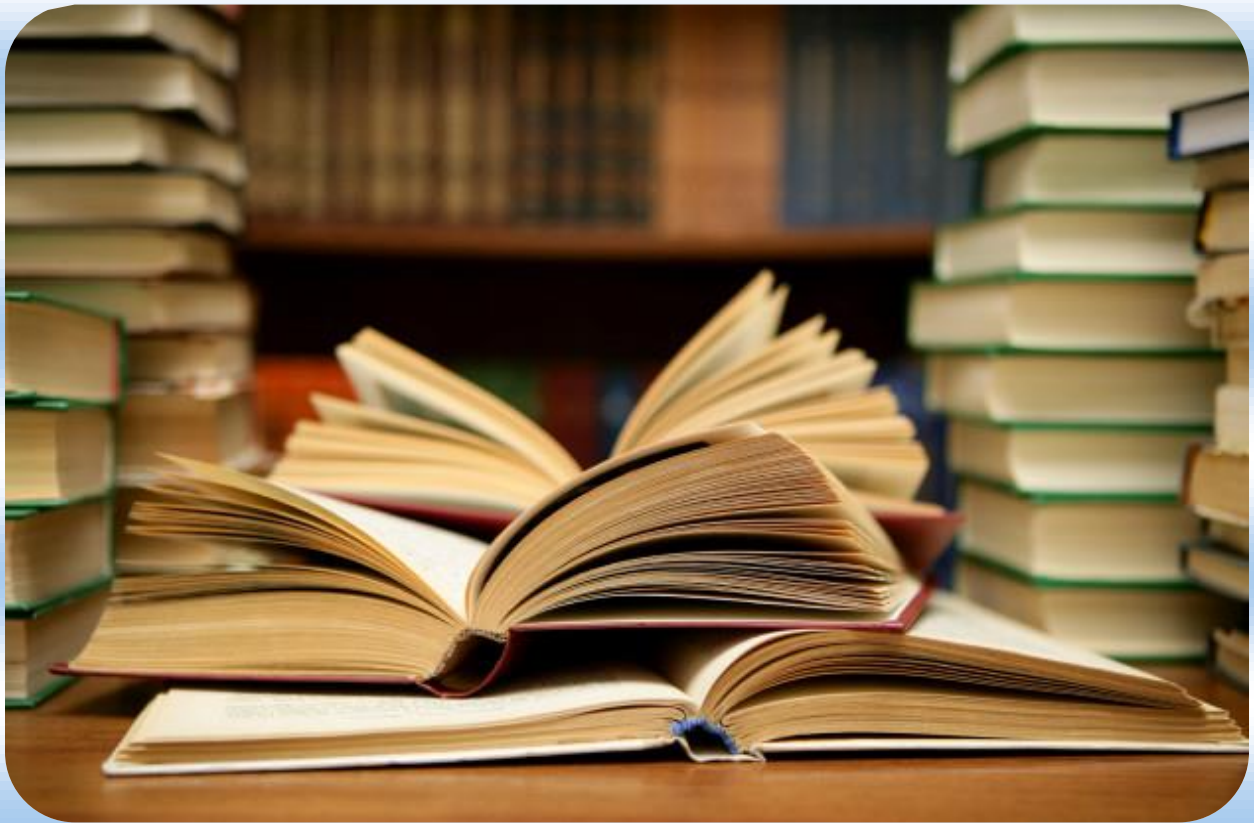


## LIBRARY & RESOURCE CENTER, NOIDA

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE MONTHLY



# OCTOBER-2024

# NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

## *10 Years of Swachh Bharat Mission: Celebrating a Decade of Cleanliness*

Swachh Bharat Mission, one of the first programmes announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi after he took office in 2014, completes 10 years on October 2. While announcing the “Clean India campaign”, the PM had said: “A clean India would be the best tribute India could pay to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary in 2019.”



## *SEBI Introduces New Asset Class and Liberalizes MF Lite Framework*

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) on Monday paved the way for introduction of a new asset class, which will add depth and variety to the investment landscape of the country. The SEBI, in its board meeting, announced the introduction of a liberalised Mutual Funds Lite (MF Lite) framework for passively managed schemes of mutual funds schemes. The board meeting was the first since Hindenburg Research and Congress’ allegations of ‘conflict of interest’ against SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch and her husband Dhaval Buch.

## *Mithun Chakraborty to Receive Dadasaheb Phalke Award*

In an industry which foists a new deity every Friday, Mithun Chakraborty’s has been a story of resilience. Announced as the recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award on Monday (September 30, 2024), Mithun Chakraborty has never been a prisoner of image



## ***Women Entrepreneurship Platform in Telangana Launched By NITI Aayog***

NITI Aayog has launched its maiden State Chapter of Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) in association with WE Hub and the Telangana government. With over 30,000 registered women entrepreneurs and associations, the WEP has over 400 mentors from different industry sectors.



## ***Finance Ministry Introduces New Norms for Handling Delayed Tax Refund Claims***

The Ministry of Finance has released new guidelines for handling delayed tax refund claims and loss carry forward applications. The new guidelines issued on Tuesday increase the limit of tax refund claim amount in condonation of delay cases which will help taxpayers who missed filing any ITR though had a tax refund due to him/her. “the present circular is being issued to deal with the applications for condonation of delay in filing returns claiming refund and returns claiming carry forward of loss and set off thereof containing comprehensive guidelines on the conditions for condonation and the procedures to be followed for deciding such matters,”.

## ***India to Host Historic First-Ever Kho Kho World Cup in 2025***

The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI), in association with the International Kho Kho Federation, announced on Wednesday that the first Kho Kho World Cup in 2025, will take place in India. The event will witness the participation of 24 countries from 6 continents and will feature 16 men's and 16 women's teams who will come together to celebrate the spirit of Kho Kho and foster global unity.





### ***Classical Language Status Granted to Marathi, Bengali, Pali, Prakrit, and Assamese***

The Union Cabinet on Thursday (October 3, 2024) approved classical language status to Marathi, Bengali, Assamese, Pali, and Prakrit. The demand for classical status for Marathi has been pending since 2013 and the approval comes just ahead of the scheduled Assembly elections in Maharashtra. The approval for Bengali comes amid Durga Puja, the biggest festival of West Bengal.

### ***Bharat Electronics and Israel Aerospace Industries Form Joint Venture***

Navratna defence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Israel's leading aerospace and defence company, have announced the establishment of a joint venture company (JVC), which has been incorporated in the name of BEL IAI AeroSystems Private Ltd. The JVC with its registered office in Delhi shall be the single point of contact (SPOC) for extending long-term product support to the Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM) systems of India's defence forces, Bengaluru-headquartered BEL said in a statement on Thursday.

### ***Reliance Group Collaborates with Bhutan on Renewable Energy***

The shares of Reliance Power, a subsidiary of Reliance Group, were trading at ₹53.64 up by ₹2.55 or 4.99 per cent on the NSE today at 11 am, a day after Reliance Group entered into a strategic partnership with Druk Holding and Investments Ltd. (DHI), the commercial arm of Bhutan's government, to develop significant renewable energy projects in the country. The agreement, signed on October 2, 2024, includes plans for a 500 MW solar plant and a 770 MW hydropower project.

### ***Adani and Google Partner to Boost Clean Energy in India***

The Adani Group and Google announced a partnership aimed at enhancing their sustainability efforts and contributing to the growth of clean energy in India. In a press release on Thursday, Adani Group said that it would supply renewable energy generated from a new solar-wind hybrid project located at Khavda, Gujarat, home to the world's largest renewable energy facility.



### ***PM Modi Launches Gaushala with Bio-CNG Plant in MP***

Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the 'Lal Tipara Gaushala' with Bio-CNG plant in Gwalior and launched various development projects of Rs 685 crore in Madhya Pradesh on the occasion of Swachhta Diwas on Wednesday. Swachhta Diwas is observed on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti (October 2) every year. The 'gaushala', or cow shelter, with the Bio-CNG plant that can produce three tonnes of natural gas per day using 100 tonnes of cow dung, has been set up in collaboration with the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), an official said.

### ***Assam's Cultural Heritage: Eight Traditional Products Receive GI Tags***

The Geographical Indications Registry in Chennai has granted the GI tag to eight products from the Assam region, including traditional food items and several unique varieties of rice beer. The application for Geographical Indication tags for three variants of rice beer was filed by the Bodo Traditional Brewers Association.



### ***Cabinet Endorses National Mission to Enhance Oilseed Production***

To reduce import dependence and achieve self-sufficiency on edible oil, the Cabinet on Thursday approved the National Mission on Edible Oils with an outlay of Rs 10,103 crore. The scheme is aimed at boosting oil seeds production from the current level of 12.7 million tonne (MT) to 20.2 MT by 2031.





### ***Department of Posts and Amazon Unite to Enhance Delivery Services***

New Delhi : The Department of Posts (DoP) under the Ministry of Communications and Amazon Transportation Services Private Limited has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to expand their ongoing collaboration. According to the Ministry of Communications, the MoU, signed in New Delhi, aims to leverage the vast postal network and Amazon's technological prowess to enhance parcel transmission and delivery across the country.

### ***India's Forex Reserves Surpass \$700 Billion Milestone for the First Time***

India's foreign exchange reserves (forex) crossed the \$700 billion milestone for the first time on record, extending its winning streak to seven straight weeks. India is now only the fourth economy in the world to cross \$700 billion in forex reserves after China, Japan, and Switzerland. The forex kitty jumped by \$12.588 billion to hit a fresh lifetime high of \$704.885 billion for the week ended September 27—in their biggest weekly increase since mid-July 2023, driven by valuation gains and dollar purchases made via the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

### ***Power Finance Corporation Secures Record USD 1.265 Billion Loan***

New Delhi: State-owned Power Finance Corporation (PFC) on Friday announced that it has secured the largest-ever foreign currency term loan of USD 1.265 billion. This landmark transaction was executed through a facility agreement with multiple banks based in IFSC GIFT City, Gandhinagar, a company statement said. According to the statement, PFC announced successful closing of issuance of largest-ever foreign currency term loan from an Indian PSU amounting to USD 1.265 billion.

### ***Yogi Adityanath Marks Mahakumbh-2025 with Logo Reveal***

NEW DELHI: Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath unveiled the logo for Maha Kumbh-2025 in Prayagraj on Sunday. He also reviewed the preparations for the upcoming event and met with saints to perform puja during his visit. "Today I got the opportunity to interact with respected saints and sages in view of Maha Kumbh-2025 at 'Tirthraj' Prayagraj, the holy land of religion, culture, and spirituality.



### ***LIC Increases Stake in Bank of Maharashtra to 7.10% via QIP***

NEW DELHI: State-owned Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) has increased its stake in Bank of Maharashtra from 4.05% to 7.10% after the life insurer acquired 25,96,86,663 equity shares through the bank's qualified institutional placement (QIP). Bank of Maharashtra raised Rs 3,499 crore through issuance of 61,01,81,311 equity shares of face value Rs 10 each to eligible qualified institutional buyers at the issue price of Rs 57.36 per share against the floor price of Rs 60.37 per equity share.

### ***HDFC Bank Divests 100% Stake in HDFC Edu for ₹192 Crore***

India's largest private sector lender HDFC Bank on Monday said that its board has approved 100% stake sale of subsidiary HDFC Education to Vama Sundari Investments in an all-cash deal amounting to Rs 192 crore. The sale price is Rs. 9.60 per share. In an exchange notification, the lender said it would divest 91% stake in HDFC Edu on or before October 31, 2024, and the remaining 9% stake will be divested before June 30, 2025. With this sale HDFC Edu would cease to be a subsidiary of the bank.

### ***Global Skincare Sensation Augustinus Bader Arrives in India Through Reliance's Tira***

Reliance's beauty platform Tira on Monday announced the launch of globally luxury skincare and haircare brand Augustinus Bader in India. Available exclusively on Tira, the luxury brand that is being launched in the country was founded by world-renowned stem cell and biomedical scientist, Professor Augustinus Bader.



### ***India's E-commerce Market Set to Reach \$325 Billion by 2030: Deloitte Report Analysis***

The Indian e-commerce market is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 21% and reach \$ 325 billion in 2030, as per Deloitte's report released on Monday. The report said that the retail sector is expected to grow at 8%, e-commerce at 21%, and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) at 10%. All the sub-sectors will see a growth of 10% plus and minus than their sectors.

### ***UP's Rural Women Drive Rs 27,000 Crore in Financial Transactions***

Enterprising women business correspondents, known as BC Sakhis, have facilitated transactions worth Rs 27,000 crore in Uttar Pradesh, earning Rs 75 crore in commission over the past four and a half years. BC Sakhis, appointed under the nationwide women empowerment programme, are members of self-help groups (SHGs) who are trained and certified to provide banking and financial services in rural areas.



### ***Tata Sons Chairman Ratan Tata Passes Away At 86***

Indian tycoon Ratan Tata has died aged 86, says the Tata Group, the conglomerate he led for more than two decades. Tata was one of India's most internationally recognised business leaders. The Tata Group is one of India's largest companies, with annual revenues in excess of \$100bn (£76.5bn).



### ***DigiLocker Partners with UMANG App for Seamless Access to Government Services***

The National e-Governance Division (NeGD) has announced the integration of the UMANG app with DigiLocker, India's digital wallet. This collaboration seeks to provide residents with seamless access to a wide range of government services, increasing ease and enabling users to manage numerous services from a single platform.





### ***UPI Transactions Surge 52% to 78.97 Billion in H1 2024: Report***

Instant payment system Unified Payment Interface (UPI) transaction volumes recorded a 52 per cent year-on-year surge to 78.97 billion in the first six months of 2024, according to a report. In its India Digital Payments Report for the first half of 2024 (January to June), payment technology service provider Worldline said on Thursday that UPI continues to rule the payment market and is rapidly expanding its reach.

### ***World's Highest Imaging Cherenkov Telescope Unveiled in Ladakh***

LEH/JAMMU: The Union Territory of Ladakh gets the Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE) observatory, the world's highest imaging Cherenkov telescope, located at an altitude of over 4,300 metres in Hanle. This observatory underscores India's advancements in space and cosmic-ray research capabilities.



### ***RSS Marks 100 Years on Vijaydashami***

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the largest voluntary organisation in the world, will enter its 100th year on this year's Vijaydashami. The organisation was founded on the festive day of 'Vijaydashmi', also known as 'Dussehra', in 1925. Since its inception the Sarsanghchalak(Chief Mentor) of the RSS delivers an annual address on Vijaydashami at Nagpur where the RSS has its headquarter.



### *Noel Tata a New Leader of Tata Group's Charitable Efforts*

Noel Tata, half-brother of the late Ratan Tata, has been unanimously elected as the chairman of Tata Trusts following the passing of the legendary industrialist Ratan N Tata on Friday. Noel Tata is already a key trustee of the Sir Dorabji Tata Trust and the Sir Ratan Tata Trust.



### *HAL Becomes 14th Maharatna Company*

Maharatna companies in India: The Government of India (GoI) has granted the 'Maharatna' status to the Indian PSU Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL). The Department of Public Enterprises informed us about HAL's upgrade to the 14th Maharatna company in India from its official 'X' channel account (formerly known as Twitter).



### *J and K Set for New Government as President's Rule is Lifted*

The president's rule was withdrawn in Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, paving the way for the formation of a new government in the union territory. The Union Home Ministry issued a gazette notification to this effect.





### ***Supreme Court's Justice Statue Removes Blindfold***

The Supreme Court (SC) of India has unveiled a redesigned version of the 'Lady Justice' statue, marking a significant departure from its colonial past. Traditionally depicted with a blindfold and a sword, the new statue now features 'Lady Justice' with open eyes and the Constitution of India in place of the sword, reflecting the judiciary's commitment to constitutional values and justice that "sees everyone equally", reported NDTV.



### ***Nayab Saini Sworn in as Haryana CM, BJP Wins Third Term***

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Nayab Singh Saini has been sworn in as the chief minister of Haryana on Thursday. The oath-taking ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and other prominent leaders. Saini stakes claim to form government On Wednesday, Saini, 54, met with Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya to formally stake his claim to form the next government after being unanimously chosen as the leader of the BJP legislative party during a meeting at the party's Panchkula office.

### ***SECL Becomes First Coal Company to Open Four AMRIT Pharmacies***

In a move towards providing affordable and accessible healthcare, South Eastern Coalfields Ltd (SECL), Chhattisgarh-based subsidiary of Coal India, inaugurated the country's 216th AMRIT (Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment) pharmacy. Located at the Health Centre in SECL's Indira Vihar Colony, Bilaspur, this new facility makes SECL the first coal company to operate four AMRIT pharmacies.

### ***Indian Railways Reduces Advance Reservation Period from 120 to 60 Days***

While reversing a decade old order, the Ministry of Railways Thursday made changes to its reservation rules and reduced the Advance Reservation Period (ARP) from 120 days to 60 days. The Ministry said that the order will be effective from November 01, 2024 and cited the new reservation period as being optimal from a passenger point of view. "With effect from 01.11.2024, the ARP will be of 60 days (excluding the day of journey) and bookings will be done accordingly.



### ***Jio Payments Bank Secures Mutual Funds Distribution License from AMFI***

Jio Payments Bank, a subsidiary of Jio Financial Services, has secured a mutual fund distribution licence from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi). The Category 1 Execution-only Platform (EOP) licence allows distribution of the direct plan of mutual fund (MF) schemes. Category 1 EOPs receive transaction charges from fund houses. The fee is capped at Rs 2 per transaction. Currently, there are 15 Category 1 EOPs registered with Amfi. The direct plan distribution business is dominated by stock brokers like Groww and Zerodha.

### ***Madhya Pradesh Introduces 'Pink Alarms' for Enhanced Women's Safety at Datia Hospital***

Bhopal: In a first, 'pink alarms' have been installed at the government-run district hospital and medical college in Datia town of Madhya Pradesh, officials said on Wednesday. The issue of safety of women staff at public hospitals came to the fore recently after the rape and murder of a trainee doctor at Kolkata's R G Kar Medical College and Hospital. The alarm system was district collector Sandeep Makin's initiative, a state public relations department official said.

### ***Abhyuday Jindal Named New President of Indian Chamber of Commerce***

Abhyuday Jindal has been named president of Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) an industry body founded in 1925, that has its headquarters in Kolkata, as per a press release. Jindal who graduated from Boston University with a degree in Economics and Business Management is the managing director of Jindal Stainless, a stainless steel manufacturer with annual turnover of Rs. 38,000 crore.

### ***Adar Poonawalla Acquires 50% Stake in Karan Johar's Dharma Productions***

In a landmark deal that has captured the attention of Bollywood and the business world alike, Adar Poonawalla has surpassed industry giants Reliance and Saregama to secure a major stake in Karan Johar's Dharma Productions. According to an official statement from the Bollywood production house, Poonawalla's Serene Entertainment has acquired a 50 per cent stake in Dharma for Rs 1,000 crore, while Johar will retain the remaining 50 per cent ownership.

### ***India-Pakistan Extend Kartarpur Corridor Agreement for Five Years***

India and Pakistan have decided to extend the validity of the agreement on the Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor by five years to ensure "uninterrupted" travel for Indian pilgrims to the holy Gurdwara in Pakistan, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) stated on Tuesday. Additionally, the MEA noted that in response to ongoing requests from pilgrims regarding the \$20 service charge imposed by Pakistan for each visitor, India has reiterated its appeal for Pakistan to waive any fees or charges for pilgrims.

# INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

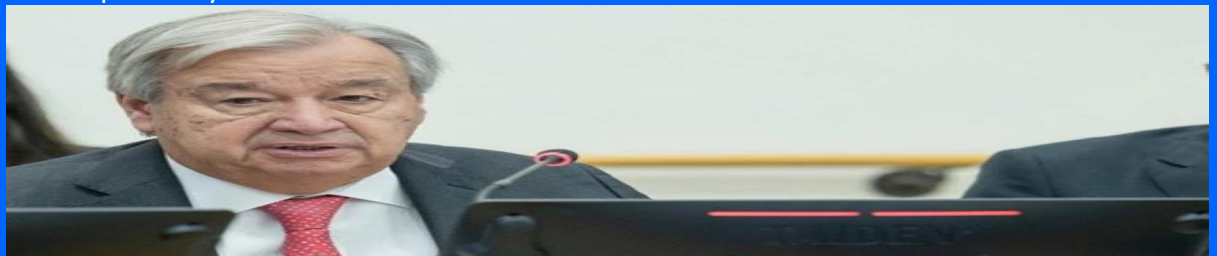
## *Italy Hosts G7 Call to Address Middle East Crisis*

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni will host a call of Group of Seven (G7) leaders later on Wednesday to discuss the crisis in the Middle East, her office said. "Italy will continue to strive for a diplomatic solution, including in its capacity as chair of the G7. I have convened a leaders' level meeting for this afternoon," Meloni was quoted as telling her cabinet.



## *UN Chief Guterres Banned to Enter in the Israel*

Israel's Foreign Minister Israel Katz announced on Wednesday that UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is banned from entering the country. This decision follows Guterres's failure to unequivocally condemn Iran's recent missile attack on Israel.



## *Sheinbaum Leads as Mexico's First Woman President*

Claudia Sheinbaum has been sworn in as Mexico's first female president. Sheinbaum took over from outgoing president – and close Morena party ally – Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador at an inauguration ceremony in the country's Congress on Tuesday.



### *Italy and Switzerland Redraw Alpine Borders*

Switzerland and Italy redrew their shared border in the Alps last week, forced by melting glaciers that, along with vast snowfields, define large sections of the territorial boundary between the Central European neighbours.



### *Nepal Appoints Prakash Man Singh Raut as Chief Justice*

President Ramchandra Paudel on Sunday appointed Prakash Man Singh Raut as the chief justice of the Supreme Court. The President made the appointment in accordance with Article 129 (2) of the constitution, based on the recommendation of the Constitutional Council, Basanta Prasad Panthi, assistant spokesperson at the Office of President said in a statement.



### *End of an Era: Singapore Bids Farewell to Horse Racing After 181 Years*

More than 180 years of horse racing came to an end in Singapore on Saturday, as the Singapore Turf Club hosted its final race day before its track is handed back to the government to provide land for new homes.





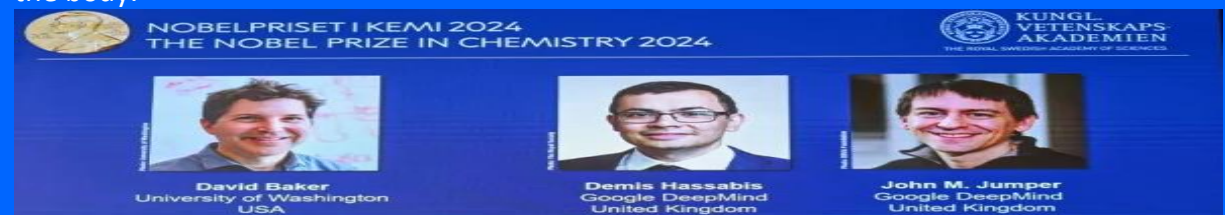
## **India and Maldives Boost Ties with \$750 Million Currency Swap Deal**

India signed a major currency swap agreement with the Maldives for \$750 million to help the island nation tide over its current foreign currency crunch, after Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu in New Delhi on Monday.



## **Baker, Hassabis, Jumper Awarded Nobel 2024 in Chemistry for Pioneering Protein Research**

Scientists David Baker, John Jumper and Demis Hassabis have won the 2024 Nobel Prize in chemistry for their work on proteins, the building blocks of life that are found in every cell of the body.



## **China's 'Anaconda Strategy' Tightens Grip on Taiwan**

As wars have ravaged Ukraine and the Middle East in 2024, the situation around Taiwan has been comparatively quiet. The crisis many observers were expecting when the year began hasn't erupted; Beijing, Washington and Taipei have managed to maintain a certain stability in an inherently unstable situation. That outcome has been a blessing for President Joe Biden, whose final year in office has been consumed by global turmoil.

## **Young Sherpa Conquers World's Tallest Mountains at 18**

A Nepalese teenager has broken the world record for the youngest mountaineer to summit Earth's 14 highest peaks. Nima Rinji Sherpa, 18, stood atop Tibet's Mount Shishapangma at about 06:05 local time on Wednesday.



### ***Abu Dhabi Crowned World's Richest City in Sovereign Wealth Funds***

As of October 2024, Global SWF has crowned Abu Dhabi with the title of world's richest country, in terms of its sovereign wealth funds. The country is estimated to boast a staggering \$1.7 trillion in capital, followed closely by Oslo(home of the world's largest SWF, NBIM), Beijing, Singapore, Riyadh and Hong Kong.



### ***Israel Kills Hamas Chief Yahya Sinwar***

Hamas's leader, Yahya Sinwar, has been killed by Israeli forces, ending a year-long hunt for the mastermind of the 7 October attack on Israel that triggered the war in Gaza. The Israeli foreign minister, Israel Katz, confirmed reports on Thursday in a message sent to counterparts around the world. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said almost immediately after Katz's statement was reported by Israeli media that Sinwar had been "eliminated".

### ***FATF Tightens Grey Listing Rules with New Risk-Based Focus***

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has announced that it was making major changes to the criteria to focus on those nations posing greater risks to the international financial system. The changes made by the FATF will ensure the listing process better targets the nations that pose the greater risk to the international financial system and contributes to more adequate support to low-capacity nations, according to the statement.

### ***Liu Yukun, Yang Ji-in Shine as ISSF Athletes of the Year***

The Paris 2024 Olympics champion in 50-metre rifle 3-position Liu Yukun of China was declared the athlete of the year by the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) during the opening ceremony of the World Cup Final at the Dr Karni Singh Range Tughlakabad, on Monday. The president of ISSF, Luciano Rossi, presented the award to Yukun Liu.



### ***Hurricane Oscar Hits Cuba, Triggers Protests Amid Economic Crisis***

Hurricane Oscar has dumped heavy rain across the eastern end of Cuba, adding to a list of woes already besetting the Caribbean's biggest island, which was hit over the weekend by a huge power cut. The deluge caused landslides, and winds of 75mph tore the roofs off houses, making work even more difficult for the engineers trying to get Cuba's electricity grid up and running again, after a weekend when the entire country of about 10 million people was plunged into darkness. "The winds have been very high," said a resident of the eastern city of Baracoa. "The sea is very dangerous and tiles have been ripped from the roof."

### ***Maldives President Introduces UPI Payment Service to Boost Economy***

Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu has taken "necessary steps" to introduce India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) in the archipelago nation, slated to benefit the Maldivian economy substantially. Developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), UPI is an instant real-time payment system for facilitating inter-bank transactions through mobile phones. Muizzu on Sunday set up a consortium to introduce UPI in the country and appointed TradeNet Maldives Corporation Limited as its leading agency, according to a press release by the President's Office. The president also suggested the participation of the country's banks, telecom companies, state-owned companies and fintech companies in the consortium

### ***Israel Joins Asian Development Bank (ADB) as 69th Member Country***

MANILA: Israel has become the newest non-regional member of the Asian Development Bank, the Philippines-based lender announced on Friday, with an analyst cautioning that the move might cause "polarisation" in the institution. The bank's board of governors had approved Israel's entry in April 2022 pending its completion of the membership requirements, the ADB said in a statement. Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich will be the country's representative, a source from ADB told AFP.

