

News Digest

NATIONAL

■ Chhattisgarh Gets New Development Projects Worth Rs. 7,600 Crore

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone, dedicated and inaugurated ten projects worth about Rs 7,600 crore in Chhattisgarh's capital Raipur. These include Raipur-Dhanbad and Raipur-Vishakhapatnam Economic Corridor. These projects are mainly related to increasing road and rail connectivity and development of



basic infrastructure. On this occasion, the PM said that today a new saga of development is being written in the aspirational districts of Chhattisgarh, which were once called backward and where violence and anarchy prevailed. Along with the poor, Dalit, backward and tribal people living in these areas, farmers and laborers are also getting benefits, as along with development, new employment opportunities are also being created. Shri Modi also inaugurated the distribution of 75 lakh cards under the Ayushman Bharat scheme.

■ UGC Makes PhD Optional for Recruitment to Post of Assistant Professor

The UGC has announced that the University Grants Commission (Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of Teachers and Other Academic Staff in Universities and Colleges and other Measures for the Maintenance of Standards in Higher Education) Regulations, 2018, have been amended and Ph.D qualification would now be optional for a teacher post. "Ph.D qualification for appointment as an Assistant Professor would continue to be optional. The National Eligibility Test (NET), State Eligibility Test (SET) and State Level Eligibility Test (SLET) shall be the minimum criteria for the direct recruitment to the post of Assistant Professor for all Higher Education Institutions," UGC Chairman M. Jagadesh Kumar said. Meanwhile, the UGC has also clarified that SET and SLET would not be a criterion for selecting Assistant Professors in Central Universities.

■ India Calls for Collective Efforts to Nurture Sustainable Startup Ecosystems

The Startup20 Shikhar event held in Gurugram, Haryana, showcased India's commitment to fostering sustainable startup ecosystems, encouraging global cooperation, and reinforcing the crucial role startups play in addressing pressing global challenges. As the event concluded on July 5, the message of collective efforts and support resonated, fostering hope for a vibrant and prosperous global startup community. On the occasion, Commerce and Industry Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal, acknowledged India's significant economic scale and market potential, crediting these factors for the thriving success of startups within the country.

■ G20 Space Economy Leaders Meet Discusses Possibilities in Space Economy

The Space Economy Leaders Meet held on July 7 in Bengaluru as part of the G20 Indian Presidency discussed the possibilities of bilateral partnership in sharing space economy. The Chairman of ISRO Shri S. Somanath informed that partnerships between space agencies, industries, and start-ups were discussed during the meeting. The discussion also covered the possibilities of the rule of law in space, guidelines and regulations in space missions, the possibility of upgrading the G20 Space Economy Leaders forum, and how to bring new countries into the space sector, helping them to build rockets and ground stations.

■ DGCA, EU Aviation Safety Agency Ink Pact for Cooperation on Drones, Air Mobility

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has entered into a pact with the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) for cooperation in the areas of unmanned aircraft systems and innovative air mobility. The two watchdogs would cooperate in the areas of development of certification standards, environmental standards and related requirements for the certification and use of unmanned aircraft systems and innovative air mobility operations. According to the Civil Aviation Ministry, the MoU will also focus on regular information sharing between the two authorities on technological developments and research.



■ First IIT Campus outside India to Be Set Up at Zanzibar in Tanzania

The first campus of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) outside India will come up at Zanzibar in Tanzania. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed for the setting up of a campus of IIT Madras in Zanzibar on July 5 in the presence of President of Tanzania Mr Hussein Ali Mwinyi and External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar who was on a four-day official visit to Tanzania. During the visit, Dr. Jaishankar also inaugurated the India-Tanzania business meeting wherein he met with the members of the Parliamentary Friendship Group for India.

INTERNATIONAL

■ SCO Summit Concludes with Adoption of New Delhi Declaration

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi virtually hosted the summit meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on 4 July, which was attended by China's President Mr Xi Jinping, Russia's President Mr Vladimir Putin, and Pak-

istan's Prime Minister Mr Shehbaz Sharif. During the summit, members reiterated their commitment to combat terrorism, separatism, and extremism. The New Delhi Declaration adopted at the conclusion of the summit focuses on forming a unified list of prohibited terrorist, separatist, and extremist organisations. The Declaration opposes the militarisation of information and communication technologies. The Declaration advocates greater cooperation in environmental protection, ecological security, and addressing climate change consequences. 2024 has been declared as the SCO Year of Environment with India handing over the Presidency to Kazakhstan.



■ PM Modi and Ex-Japan PM Yoshihide Suga Discuss Global Partnership

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi met the Chairman of the Japan-India Association (JIA) and former Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Yoshihide Suga July 6 in New Delhi. Mr. Suga was on a visit to India with a delegation of over 100 members. The leaders exchanged views on further deepening of Special Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan, including in the areas of investment and economic cooperation, railways, people-to-people linkages and skill development partnership. They welcomed the growing popularity of Yoga and Ayurveda in Japan and discussed ways to further strengthen cultural ties between India and Japan. The Prime Minister invited Japanese investors to expand their existing investments and explore new avenues of cooperation.

■ UK Calls for Expansion of UNSC's Permanent Seats

The UK, which holds the UNSC Presidency for the month of July this year, has called for the expansion of the UNSC's permanent seats to include India, Brazil, Germany and Japan as well as African representation. UK's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Ms. Barbara Woodward said the UK's presidency of the Security Council marks the first step in that process. She was briefing UN correspondents on the programme of work of the Security Council for the month.

ECONOMY

■ India's Global Commercial Services Exports Double: World Bank & WTO

According to a joint report by the World Bank and World Trade Organization (WTO), India has experienced a significant increase in its share of global commercial services exports. Between 2005 and 2022, India's share has doubled from 2 percent to 4.4 percent. One notable area where India has emerged as a popular destination is medical travel. The report reveals that from 2009 to 2019, India hosted approximately 3.5 million foreign patients. These patients come from various countries, including developed nations like the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as developing countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. The primary motivations for seeking medical treatment in India are the combination of lower costs and high-quality healthcare services.

■ Significant Improvement in Performance of Public Sector Banks: FM



Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Smt. Nirmla Sitharaman has said the business outlook of India's Public Sector Banks (PSBs) is progressively improving in spite of the headwinds from recent global banking sector developments. The minister noted that the asset quality of PSBs has improved significantly with gross NPAs (non performing assets) at 4.97% and

net NPAs at 1.24% in March 2023. During the last financial year, PSBs earned a record aggregate net profit of around Rs. 1,05,000 crore. The Finance Minister emphasised on banks' adherence to the regulatory framework by focusing on risk management, and diversification of the business base.

SPORTS

■ India Lifts SAFF Championships Trophy for Ninth Time

India have lifted the SAFF Championships trophy for the ninth time, beating Kuwait 5-4 in the penalty shoot-out in the final after a 1-1 stalemate at the end of regulation time at Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru on July 4. Indian captain Sunil Chhetri won the Golden Boot for scoring the most number of goals in the tournament. Bangladesh's Anisur Rahman Zico won the best goalkeeper award of the tournament. Nepal football team won the Fairplay award for playing in the spirit of the game.



■ World Archery Youth Championships: Indian Pair Priyansh & Avneet Kaur Win Gold

In the junior mixed team compound final of the World Archery Youth Championships in Ireland, the pair of Indian archers Priyansh and Avneet Kaur won gold, defeating Israel. It was a nail-biting contest wherein the Indian players beat Israel with a close score of 146-144 on July 5. India's Manav Jadhav and Aishwarya Sharma also won a bronze medal defeating Mexico in the cadet mixed compound event.

(Source: AIR/PIB)