

News Digest

NATIONAL

Meri Maati Mera Desh Campaign Culminates with Foundation Laying of Amrit Vatika

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of *Amrit Vatika* and *Amrit Mahotsav Memorial* at *Kartavya Path* in New Delhi on October 31, marking the culmination of the 'Meri Maati Mera Desh' campaign. The *Amrit Mahotsav Memorial* is to be constructed from soil gathered from every corner of the nation as part of the 'Amrit Kalash Yatra' undertaken to celebrate India's collective strength and unity, exemplifying the country's achievements during *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*. The PM said that the *Amrit Vatika*, to be established with saplings from every part of the country, will instill the values of 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' in the younger generation and the soil collected from across India will drive future generations towards realising the vision of a 'Viksit Bharat.' Delegates from 36 States and Union Territories gathered in the National Capital to participate in the final event of 'Meri Maati Mera Desh'.



Finance Minister Reaffirms Support for Tamil Community in Sri Lanka

Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, during the 'NAAM 200' commemoration in Colombo, conveyed India's unwavering support for the Indian Origin Tamil community in Sri Lanka. She said that India's recent US\$4 billion humanitarian aid to Sri Lanka during its economic crisis is a testament to the enduring solidarity between the two nations. The Finance Minister addressed the India-Sri Lanka Business Summit, advocating for a regional arrangement for common currency usage to save foreign exchange. During a meeting with Sri Lanka's President Mr. Ranil Wickremesinghe, they discussed joint initiatives in the economic and commercial sphere as envisioned in the "Vision document on Economic Partnership" adopted during Mr. Wickremesinghe's visit to India in July this year.

India and Italy Sign Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement

India and Italy have signed a Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement, aiming to facilitate the movement of workers, students, and professionals between the two nations. The agreement was inked following a comprehensive and productive meeting between India's External Affairs Minister, Dr. S Jaishankar, and Italy's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Antonio Tajani during the former's recent visit to Italy. During their discussions, the leaders stressed the importance of strengthening the India-Italy strategic partnership and exploring potential collaboration in agro-tech, innovation, space, defense, and the digital domain. They also delved into in-depth conversations about the West Asia situation, the Ukraine conflict, and the Indo-Pacific landscape. Additionally, the External Affairs Minister met with Italy's Defense Minister, Guido Crosetto, to discuss advancing their renewed defense and security partnership.



NSDCI Inks Skilled International Workforce Mobility Agreement with UAE Firm

The National Skill Development Corporation of India (NSDCI) and EFS Facilities Services Group, a UAE-based Facilities Management Firm, have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at advancing Skilled International Workforce Mobility (IWM) for Indian nationals, with a specific emphasis on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. The MoU envisions collaboration between the two parties to establish a foundational framework for enhancing skilled workforce mobility by co-branding skilling institutions, and preparing Indian nationals with the necessary skills for both international and local employment. Furthermore, the collaboration aims to facilitate access to approximately 5,000 overseas job opportunities for skilled Indian workers over the next three years. NSDCI and EFS will also collaborate in developing courses for the Skill India Digital App, supporting accreditation, and curriculum development for various training institutes.

ECI Partners with Ministry of Education to Boost Electoral Literacy in Classrooms

The Election Commission of India (ECI) and the Ministry of Education have joined forces to promote electoral literacy in schools nationwide. This initiative integrates voter education into the curriculum for students in grades 6 to 12 in order to prepare students for their first vote and instill democratic values from a young age. Each senior secondary school will require establishing a "Democracy Room" for voter education activities, offering students a platform to learn and engage in India's democratic processes. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) will update textbooks to include electoral literacy content and advise other educational boards to follow suit.

Centre Establishes Institutional Mechanism to Combat Film Piracy

In a bid to combat the piracy of film content, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) has introduced an institutional mechanism comprising twelve officers from the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) and the Ministry. The panel will receive piracy complaints and instruct intermediaries to remove pirated content from digital platforms, including websites, apps, and links. Shri Apurva Chandra, (the Secretary of MIB), stated that this move is aimed at curtailing the

escalating issue of piracy, driven by the proliferation of the internet. He highlighted the detrimental impact of piracy on content creators, with the film industry suffering losses of Rs. 20,000 crore annually due to this illegal practice.

INTERNATIONAL

28 Countries Sign Landmark AI Safety Agreement at Bletchley Park Summit

In a historic move, 28 countries, including India, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the European Union, have signed the world's first agreement focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI) safety. The groundbreaking accord was formalised during a two-day 'AI Safety Summit 2023' held at the historic World War II Code-Breaking Center in Bletchley Park, United Kingdom. This momentous agreement has been dubbed the 'Bletchley Declaration'. Union Minister of State for Electronics and IT, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar, who represented India at the Summit, highlighted India's approach to AI, characterised by principles of openness, safety, trust, and accountability.



Russian President Signs Bill Revoking Global Nuclear Test Ban Ratification

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed a bill to revoke Russia's ratification of the global nuclear test ban, following recent voting in both houses of the Russian parliament to rescind Moscow's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). President Putin explained that this move aligns with the stance taken by the United States, which has signed but not ratified the CTBT. Other than Russia and the US, The CTBT adopted in 1996, has yet to be ratified by China, India, Pakistan, North Korea, Israel, Iran, and Egypt.

ECONOMY

PM Inaugurates 'World Food India 2023,' Highlights Opportunities in Food Processing Sector



A three day event aimed at placing India on the global food map, the second edition of 'World Food India 2023' was held New Delhi. Inaugurating the event, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi highlighted India's remarkable growth in the food processing industry, noting that the increasing demand for packaged food presents golden opportunities for farmers, startups, and entrepreneurs. He further stated

that India's rich food culture, deeply rooted in Ayurveda and traditions, is poised to benefit the entire world, noting how millets, recognised by India as "Shree Anna" have become a key component of what is considered the 'superfood bucket.' Addressing the issue of food wastage, Prime Minister Shri Modi stressed the importance of designing food products to minimise waste. During the event, the Prime Minister distributed Seed Capital Assistance to over one lakh Self Help Groups members, enabling them to enhance packaging and manufacturing quality, thereby realising better prices in the market.

India's First International Cruise Liner Costa Serena Officially Launched

Union Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, officially launched the domestic sailing of the first International Cruise Liner, 'Costa Serena,' in Mumbai on November 3. Costa Cruise is projected to carry approximately 45,000 passengers on its voyages over the next two months. These cruise initiatives align with the 'Dekho Apna Desh' programme, which was launched on the Prime Minister's call to encourage middle-class individuals to prioritise domestic tourism over international travel.



SPORTS

Team India Shine with Best-Ever Performance at 4th Asian Para Games



The 4th Asian Para Games concluded with a spectacular closing ceremony at the Hangzhou Olympic Sports Expo Centre on October 28. India emerged from the sporting extravaganza with an exceptional achievement, securing their best-ever medal haul. The Indian contingent clinched a total of 111 medals, comprising 29 gold, 31 silver, and 51 bronze medals. With this remarkable feat, India claimed the fifth position overall in the medal tally. Host China topped the medal chart with a total of 521 medals, followed by Iran, Japan, and Korea. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi interacted with India's Asian Para Games contingent at Major Dhyana Chand National Stadium in New Delhi on 1 November and congratulated them for their outstanding achievements. Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Shri Anurag Singh Thakur emphasised that this is just the beginning, and the government is committed to nurturing and supporting India's sporting talents for a brighter and more promising future.

(Source: AIR/PIB)