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NEWSLETTER

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NATIONAL NEWS

INDIA IS ELECTED AS A MEMBER OF THE UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN



Image Source: United Nations

India beat China and Afghanistan to become a member of the commission on the status of women (CSW), a body of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). India won the ballot amongst 54 ECOSOC members with China coming second. The term of membership will be for four years from 2021. The CSW is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. A functional commission of the ECOSOC, it was established by the ECOSOC resolution 11(II) of June 21, 1946. The CSW promotes women's rights, highlights the reality of women's lives throughout the world and helps in shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Forty-five of the UN's member states serve as members of the commission at any one time. The members are elected by the Economic and Social Council on the basis of equitable geographical distribution — 13 members from Africa, 11 from Asia, nine from Latin America and the Caribbean, eight from Western Europe and other states and four from Eastern Europe.

HARIVANSH NARAYAN SINGH ELECTED AS DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF RAJYA SABHA



National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate and Janta Dal United MP Harivansh Narayan Singh was re-elected as the deputy chairman of Rajya Sabha by a voice vote. His name was proposed by BJP president and MP Jagat Prakash Nadda and was seconded by the Leader of the House, Thawarchand Gehlot. The opposition had fielded RJD MP Manoj Jha whose name was proposed by the Leader of the Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad and was seconded by DMK MP Tiruchi Siva and Samajwadi Party MP Javed Ali. The opposition however did not ask for a vote since it was clear that they did not have the numbers. Mr. Harivansh Narayan Singh is a Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) from Bihar.

GOVERNMENT TELLS SUPREME COURT TO REGULATE DIGITAL MEDIA

The Union government said that the Supreme Court should frame guidelines drawing the line between journalistic freedom and responsible journalism for digital media first rather than mainstream electronic and print media. Web-based news portals, YouTube channels as well as Over The Top (OTT) platforms had huge potential to become viral. Unlike mainstream publication and telecast, digital media was perpetually widening its viewership, like in a loop, through multiple web and social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook. Hence, what was written or shown in digital media had “serious impact and potential”, the government said. It was responding to a proposal by the court to frame guidelines against communal and derogatory content in mainstream media. The court had mooted the idea while staying the broadcast of show “Bindas Bol” on Sudarshan TV on September 15. The show is accused of “vilifying” members of the Muslim community who join the civil services.

TATA GROUP WINS THE BID TO CONSTRUCT THE NEW PARLIAMENT COMPLEX



Image Source: Parliament of India

Tata Projects Limited (TPL), a Tata Group company, won the contract to build a new Parliament building at a cost of Rs 861.90 crore. Among all the bids, Tata Group emerged as the lowest bidder. The next lowest bidder, L&T Ltd, had submitted a bid of Rs 865 crore. The new Parliament building will be constructed close to the existing one under the Central Vista redevelopment project, and it is expected to be completed in 21 months. According to the Central Public Works Department (CPWD), the new building will come up at plot number 118 of the Parliament House Estate. The CPWD said the existing Parliament building will continue to function during the entire period of execution of the project. After its completion, the new building will have the capacity to seat 1,400 MPs. This capacity will be needed as the house strength is set to increase once the delimitation of the constituencies takes place.

INDIA RANKS 116TH IN THE HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX OF THE WORLD BANK

India has been ranked at the 116th position in the latest edition of the World Bank's annual Human Capital Index that benchmarks key components of human capital across countries. However, India's score increased to 0.49 from 0.44 in 2018, as per the Human Capital Index report released by the World Bank. The 2020 Human Capital Index update includes health and education data for 174 countries — covering 98 per cent of the world's population — up to March 2020, providing a pre-pandemic baseline on the health and education of children, with the biggest strides made in low-income countries. Last year, India had raised “serious reservations” over the Human Capital Index, wherein India was ranked 115 out of 157 countries. This year India finds itself at 116th from among 174 countries.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

EXECUTION OF NAVID AFKARI

Iran executed the wrestling champion Navid Afkari, who was charged of stabbing a security guard during an anti-government protest of 2018. The conviction of Navid Afkari drew international attention and social media campaigns that portrayed him as one of the victims of being a part of anti-government protests. The International Olympic committee and the US president Trump had requested the Iranian government to spare the life of the wrestling champion. The execution has saddened the people of Iran and they are now furious because the Islamic Republic has killed one of them for the crime of protesting.

TRUMP IDENTIFIES INDIA AND 20 OTHER NATIONS AS MAJOR ILLICIT DRUG-PRODUCING COUNTRIES

United Nations investigators stated that the Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and other Ministers are responsible for crime against humanity that includes extrajudicial killings. The first report of fact-finding mission which was created by the UN human rights council stated that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Venezuelan authorities and security force, since 2014 has planned and executed serious human rights violations.

PAKISTAN PARLIAMENT HAS EXTENDED THE ORDINANCE ON KULBHUSHAN JADHAV FOR 4 MONTHS

The International Court of Justice (Review and Reconsideration) Ordinance was to expire on September 17 but the lower house extended it for four months. Kulbhushan Jadhav, an Indian Navy officer was sentenced to death by the military court of Pakistan on the charges of 'espionage and terrorism'. India approached ICJ in order to defend Jadhav against the death sentence. This Ordinance was made to implement the verdict of the international court of justice that has asked Pakistan to provide effective review and reconsideration of the sentence given to Jadhav by Pakistani military court.

PALESTINE TO MOURN 'BLACK DAY'



Image Source: Reuters

The foreign ministers of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain have signed normalising accords with Israel. The signing of the accords between Israel and two Gulf States will amount to a 'black day' for the Arab world. The Palestinian authority in West bank and Islamist movement Hamas have condemned the accords as a 'stab in the back' as they believe that the accords are a defeat for Arab League institutions, which are not United but divided.

NEPAL INTRODUCED NEW TEXT BOOKS WITH REVISED MAP INCORPORATING INDIAN AREAS

The Curriculum Development Centre, under the Ministry of Education, Nepal has introduced new curriculum text books in the schools that include the country's revised political map that shows 3 Indian areas as part of its territory namely Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura areas. The book has been titled Nepal's territory and the reading materials for border issues for the 9th and 12th grade have a preface written by the Education Minister himself. In May, Nepal released the revised political administrative map of the country laying claim over three strategically important areas in Uttarakhand to which India termed the 'artificial enlargement' as untenable as India maintains that the areas belong to it.

LEGAL NEWS

DECISION ON THE RIGHT TO OFFER WORSHIP IN A MOSQUE SHALL NOT BE MADE BY THE WAQF BOARD- KERALA HIGH COURT

While considering a writ petition (Najeem vs. Kerala State Waqf Board), the Kerala High court observed that every Mohammedan has the right to enter a Mosque to worship God without a doubt. The petition was filed by a person who had been removed from the membership of the Jamaath. The Court observed that Section 32 of the Wakf Act does not empower the Waqf board to take decisions that determine the eligibility of a person to be a member of the Jamaath on the contention that they have a right to worship which shall be decided in a properly initiated civil suit. Reliance was made on the decision in Pathanamthitta Majillissae Islamiya v. Shaik Mohammed reported in [AIR 1963 Kerala 49] has held that the right to offer prayers in a Mosque is a legal right for the disturbance for which a Muslim is entitled to seek relief in a court of law. Therefore, the writ petition was dismissed on the grounds that it would not prejudice his right to approach the Waqf Tribunal for appropriate relief.

FARMERS PRODUCE TRADE AND COMMERCE BILL 2020

Introduced by the Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers welfare, rural development Mr. Narendra Singh Tomar, the bill which was passed in the Lok Sabha on 17 September 2020 aims to increase the farmers' income and transform agriculture in India. A barrier free trade can be availed post the enactment of the bill. An ecosystem shall be created wherein freedom of choice related to the sale and purchase of produce will be given to the farmers and traders. Remunerative prices which promote transparent and barrier free interstate and intrastate trade to ensure a competitive trading channel shall also be facilitated. Earlier, the sale of produce beyond the APMC market yard was restricted which lead the farmers to suffer losses since they could only sell to registered licensees of the state government. With the passing of this bill the highly regulated farmers market can be unlocked thereby opening avenues for new choices.

ANGANWADI WORKERS DO NOT FALL UNDER SECTION 14 OF THE CAT ACT

The High Court of Jammu and Kashmir ruled that Anganwadi workers will not be covered under the Section 14 of the CAT Act since they do not hold a civil post therefore the tribunal shall not have jurisdiction to hear a petition. The petition was filed in relation to recruitment as an Anganwadi worker which was heard by Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey. The necessity to transfer the petition to the Central Administrative Tribunal, Jammu was also considered by the High Court when the matter was taken up. The petitioner contended that Anganwadi workers do not hold civil posts nor do they constitute service, therefore any matter related to their recruitment or in its relation shall not fall under Chapter III and V of the Administrative Tribunal Act, 1985 therefore the tribunal does not have jurisdiction. Relying upon the case of State of Assam v. Kanak Chandra Dutta AIR 1967 SC 884 which states that ‘appointment under a scheme which is not permanent in nature, and appointed, although might have continued for a long time, do not hold a civil post.’ The court therefore concluded that the court it has the jurisdiction to entertain the petition as the court of first instance and that it shall not be transferred to the tribunal.

INSTITUTE OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN AYURVEDA BILL 2020 **APPROVED BY THE PARLIAMENT**

On September 16, both the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha approved the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda Bill 2020. The bill has proposed to merge three Ayurveda institutions namely- Shree Gulabkunverba Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, The Institute of Post-Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda and the Indian Institute of Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Sciences in Jamnagar Gujarat into one. An institute in teaching and research (IoTR) in Ayurveda shall also be declared as a national institution. IoTR shall be established with the objective of meeting the needs of having medical teachers and specialists thereby developing a pattern in Ayurveda and pharmacy.



COVID NEWS

RUSSIA AND INDIA FINALIZE THE DEAL FOR COVID VACCINE SUPPLY



Image Source: The Hills Times

Russia's sovereign wealth fund will supply 100 million doses of its potential coronavirus vaccine to Indian drug company Dr Reddy's Laboratories as Moscow speeds up plans to distribute its shot abroad. The deal for its Sputnik-V vaccine candidate comes after the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) reached agreements with Indian manufacturers to produce 300 million doses of the shot in India, also a major consumer of Russian oil and arms. The agreement brings the total number of doses Russia has so far announced that it will supply abroad to just over 200 million - half to Latin America and half to India. RDIF has said it has received requests totalling 1 billion doses. Deliveries to India, which has a population of more than 1.3 billion, could begin in late 2020, RDIF said, adding this was subject to the completion of trials and Sputnik-V's registration by regulatory authorities in India. Phase III trials, involving at least 40,000 people, are ongoing in Russia. Initial results are expected in October or November, RDIF head Kirill Dmitriev has said. Dr Reddy's, one of India's top pharmaceutical companies, will carry out Phase III clinical trials of Sputnik-V in India, RDIF said.

IMPORTANT DATES

14TH SEPTEMBER: HINDI DIWAS

Hindi was adopted as one of the two official languages of India by the Constituent Assembly due to the efforts of Beohar Rajendra Simha along with Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, Kaka Kalelkar, Maithili Sharan Gupt and Seth Govind Das. As such, on the 50th birthday of Beohar Rajendra Simha, on 14th September, 1949, the efforts resulted in the adoption of Hindi as an official language and hence this day is celebrated as Hindi Diwas in India.

16TH SEPTEMBER: WORLD OZONE DAY

The International Day for the preservation of the ozone layer, also known as the World Ozone day is observed 16th September every year to commemorate the signing of Montreal protocol in 1987 which aims to reduce the usage of substances that deplete the ozone layer. This year's theme is: "Ozone for life: 35 years of ozone layer protection".

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