

Daily Current Affairs 22-25 September 2018 with PDF

India and States

PM Modi launches Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 23, 2018 launched the flagship scheme 'Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana' (PMJAY), also known as Ayushman Bharat or the National Health Protection Mission (AB-NHPM).
- While launching the healthcare scheme at Ranchi, Jharkhand, PM Modi said that "This is the world's largest health scheme which will serve a population that equals 27-28 European countries. The beneficiaries are almost equal to the population of Canada, Mexico and US put together."
- Beneficiaries of the Ayushman Bharat insurance programme in Jharkhand were sent a two-page personalised letter from PM Modi outlining the importance and benefits of the project. The government will send similar letters to 10.74 crore beneficiary families. The letters will have photograph of PM Modi.
- On the same occasion, the Prime Minister also launched a toll free number 14555 for people to get more information about Ayushma Bharat scheme.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (Ayushman Bharat or AB-NHPM)

- Ayushman Bharat, the government-sponsored health insurance scheme, will provide free coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family per year in any government or even empanelled private hospitals all over India.
- Launched with an aim to help the poor and the economically deprived, the scheme will be available for 10.74 crore beneficiary families and about 50 crore Indian citizens.
- This scheme will strengthen the healthcare services in India. Around 13000 hospitals in the country have been coordinated for the implementation of the scheme.
- The Ayushman Bharat programme will be funded with 60 percent contribution from the Centre and the remaining from the states.
- The scheme aims to target poor and vulnerable population of the country, based on the Socio Economic and Caste Census 2011 (SECC) database. There will be no cap on family size and age in the scheme.

PM Modi inaugurates Jharsuguda Airport; flags off UDAN flight between Jharsuguda-Raipur sector

- PM Narendra Modi on September 22, 2018 inaugurated the airport at Jharsuguda, the powerhouse of Odisha, in the presence of Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Union Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu, Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram.
- On the same occasion, Prime Minister also flagged off the UDAN flight on Jharsuguda-Raipur sector.
- Jharsuguda is the second airport of Odisha after Bhubaneswar to become operational.

- It is the first airport to provide necessary connectivity to Bhubaneswar, Raipur and Ranchi under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) UDAN.
- Jharsuguda Airport has been developed by the Airports Authority of India in collaboration with Odisha Government at an estimated cost of Rs 210 Crores with a contribution of Rs 75 Crores from the State.

India conducts successful test of Prithvi Defence Vehicle

- India on September 23, 2018 conducted a successful test of its indigenously designed ballistic missile defense system off the coast of Odisha. With the test, India achieved a major milestone in developing a two-layer Ballistic Missile Defence system.
- The mission, named Prithvi Defence Vehicle (PDV) mission, aimed to engage targets in the exo-atmosphere region at an altitude above 50km of the earth's atmosphere. The test was conducted from Abdul Kalam Island, earlier known as Wheeler Island of the Integrated Test Range (ITR).

India, China to sign internal security cooperation agreement

- India and China will sign an internal security cooperation agreement during the forthcoming visit of China's Minister of Public Security to India.
- Zhao Kezhi, China's Minister of Public Security is expected to visit India in October 2018 and hold meetings with Home Minister Rajnath Singh during which they will discuss various aspects of security cooperation between the two countries.
- During the visit of the Chinese leader, an agreement on internal security cooperation between the two countries will be signed.

India to organise 'Gandhi March' in Netherlands

- India will organise 'Gandhi March' from the iconic Peace Palace at the Hague to Grote Kerk to launch the two-year long celebrations of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.
- According to a statement issued by the Indian Embassy in Hague, the 'Gandhi March' will see participation of people of all nationalities and around 20 ambassadors of different countries.
- On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti on October 2, marked as International Day of Non-Violence, five other events will be held in The Hague, Amsterdam, Utrecht and Zoetermeer.

Assam government to provide electricity connection to all households by 31 December

- The Assam government will provide electricity connection to all households by December 31, 2018 under SOUVAGYA scheme.
- 78 percent works have already been completed as of now.
- Over 13 lakh families remaining will get connection by this year.
- 40 thousand solar connections would be given at difficult areas.
- 3500 appointments will be given in the Power sector in the state.

PM Modi inaugurates Sikkim's first-ever airport

- Sikkim's first-ever airport was inaugurated by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 24, 2018 at Pakyong. The development is a historic occasion for the entire northeast region of India.
- Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that with the Pakyong Airport, the country has hit a century of airports. The development not only eases connectivity to the Himalayan state but also brings it on the air-map of the world.
- The airport was constructed by the Airports Authority of India. Until now, Sikkim was the only state in India remaining without a functional airport.

PM Modi pays tributes to Deendayal Upadhyaya on his birth anniversary

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 25, 2018 paid tributes to Deendayal Upadhyaya on his birth anniversary.
- 25th September is observed as Antyodaya Diwas every year to mark the birth anniversary of Deendayal Upadhyaya.
- Deendayal Upadhyaya was born in Mathura in 1916 and he was the leader of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh from 1953 to 1968.
- Upadhyaya, a philosopher and a leader who maintained the highest standards of personal integrity, has been the source of ideological guidance and moral inspiration for the BJP since its inception.

Village Rockstars is India's official entry to Oscars 2019

- Village Rockstars, an Assamese language feature film by National Award-winning filmmaker Rima Das, was on September 22, 2018 selected as India's official entry for the Best Foreign Language Film category of the 2019 Academy (Oscar) Awards.
- The announcement was made by SV Rajendra Singh Babu, Chairman of the Selection Committee for Oscar Award, FFI.
- The movie's entry to Oscars 2019 is commendable as it had to compete with 27 other contenders including Hichki, Padmaavat, Raazi, Love Sonia, Nude, Pihu, Manto, October, Tumbaad, Halkaa, Kadvi Hawa and Padman.

Government inaugurates National Orientation workshop on National e-Vidhan Application

- Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Arjun Ram Meghwal on September 24, 2018 inaugurated the two-day National Orientation workshop on National e-Vidhan Application (NeVA).
- On the same occasion, Meghwal also launched the new website of the NeVA and administered the Swachhata Pledge to over 200 delegates, which included senior officers from Secretariats of Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, 31 Legislative Assemblies and 7 Legislative Councils.

Arunachal CM launches GeM in state

- Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu on September 24, 2018 informed that more than 26,000 government agencies have been incorporated in the Government e Marketplace (GeM).
- Launching the nation-wide mission for promotion of GeM here, the CM said that the mission is aimed at bringing in more transparency and streamlining the government procurement.
- He said that the objective of the launch is to accelerate the adoption and use of GeM by state government and its agencies.

Delhi HC bans slaughtering of birds at Ghazipur mandi

- The Delhi High Court on September 24, 2018 banned slaughtering of birds in the Ghazipur murga mandi here.
- The court stated in its interim order that only the selling of live birds will be permitted in the area. The court asked the authorities to file a compliance report on its order within a week.
- The court was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) alleging that poultry birds are being traded and slaughtered illegally at the Ghazipur mandi in east Delhi.
- The court asked the authorities to come up with a plan to set up a designated slaughter house in the area and till then the interim order will remain in operation.

Supreme Court constitutes committee to look into jail reforms

- The Supreme Court on September 25, 2018 constituted a three-member committee to look into the problems of jails in India and suggest reform measures.
- The committee headed by former SC judge Justice Amitava Roy will look into the aspect of jail reforms across the country and suggest measures to deal with them.
- The committee, chaired by SC judge Amitava Roy, would comprise two officials from the Union Government.
- The committee's duties will include looking into the problems of jails across the country including overcrowding in prisons, issue of human rights of prisoners and issues concerning women prisoners languishing in cells for years. After studying the problems, the committee would be required to suggest measures to deal with them.

Finance

High-Level Committee recommends completion of stalled housing projects in Noida, Greater Noida

- A high-level committee of the Uttar Pradesh Government has come out with recommendations that are aimed at providing a solution to the completion of homes in the stalled projects of Noida, Greater Noida and Yamuna Expressway.
- The committee, chaired by Durga Shankar Mishra, the Secretary in the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), was formed by the state government through its order dated June 18, 2018 to address the issues of home buyers and affected parties of Noida, Greater Noida and Yamuna Expressway.

- The committee held deliberations with all the concerned stakeholders including home buyers association, developers and their association, bankers and administrative authorities before finalising its report.

First assembly of ISA; Second ministerial of IORA; Second REINVEST meet to be held in India

- The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is organising the First Assembly of International Solar Alliance (ISA); the 2nd Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Renewable Energy Ministerial Meeting and the 2nd Global Renewable Energy Investment Meeting and Expo, (REINVEST- 2018) in New Delhi.
- The three events will be inaugurated in a common function by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in the presence of Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of United Nations on October 2, 2018.
- The Business and Technical Sessions of ISA Assembly, IORA Meet and RE-INVEST 2018 Expo will be held at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida, UP.

Flipkart acquires Israel-based Upstream Commerce

- E-commerce marketplace Flipkart has announced the acquisition of Israel based Upstream Commerce, a world leader in real-time pricing and product assortment optimization solutions.
- One of Israel's leading technology startups, Upstream Commerce, builds cloud-based, automated competitive pricing and product analysis solutions. These solutions will strengthen Flipkart's ability to deliver insights to its sellers, helping them optimize their product assortment and pricing strategies and find gaps in the market to serve customers better.
- Post the acquisition, the Upstream Commerce team, while continuing to work out of Israel, will become a part of Flipkart and become Flipkart's one of the many global centers for future data science work.
- The acquisition is in line with Flipkart's vision to solve e-commerce challenges through technology innovations- both through in house efforts as well as inorganic route, and will help provide wider selection and better pricing for Flipkart customers

World

Nepal to become world's first country to double its tiger population

- Nepal is set to become the first country in the world to double its tiger population as part of the World Wildlife Foundation's (WWF) 'Tx2' programme which aims to double the number of tigers all over the world.
- The government of Nepal announced on September 23, 2018, on the occasion of National Conservation Day, that there are now an estimated 235 wild tigers in the nation, nearly double the number from around 121 in 2009.
- Nepal had conducted a national tiger survey between November 2017 and April 2018 in the transboundary Terai Arc Landscape (TAL), a vast area of diverse ecosystems shared with India.
- The survey revealed that Nepal's tiger population rose to 235 from 121 in 2009.

Ibrahim Mohamed Solih wins Maldives Presidential Election 2018

- Opposition candidate, Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, on September 24, 2018 won the Maldives Presidential Election 2018, defeating incumbent President Yameen Abdul Gayoom, who will stay on in the presidency until his term ends on November 17, 2018.
- Ibrahim Mohammad Solih is a consensus candidate of the joint opposition, which includes the Maldivian Democratic Party, the Jumhooree Party, the Adhaalat Party and former president Maumoon Abdul Gayoom's own faction of the Progressive Party.
- As per the results announced by Maldives' National Elections Commission, Solih fetched 58.3 percent of the votes or 134616 ballots, compared to 41.5 percent or 96142 votes secured by Abdul Gayoom of Progressive Party of Maldives.

Instagram co-founders Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger resign

- Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, the co-founders of the photo-sharing app Instagram, on September 24, 2018 announced to resign from their respective positions in the social media company.
- Mike Krieger is the Chief Technical Officer, while Kevin Systrom is the Chief Executive Officer. They founded the photo-sharing app in 2010 and sold it to Facebook in 2012 for about USD 1 billion.
- Though they did not mention the reason to leave the company, however, revealed their plan to take time off to explore their creativity again.

Statue of Nelson Mandela unveiled at United Nations

- A statue of Nelson Mandela was unveiled at the United Nations to honour the late South African leader's birth.
- This year marks the 100th birth anniversary of Nelson Mandela and the UN is declaring 2019-2028 the "Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace".
- Mandela embodied the highest values of the United Nations peace, forgiveness, compassion and human dignity.

UAE to host Interfaith Alliance Forum in November 2018

- The UAE will host the Interfaith Alliance Forum in Abu Dhabi on November 19-20, 2018.
- The announcement was made during a press conference held at the Ministry of Interior headquarters in Abu Dhabi.
- The forum aims to address and discuss social challenges and to strengthen efforts by religious leaders to formulate cohesive ideas that enhance the protection of the young individuals from extortion and crime via the internet.
- The Interfaith Alliance Forum coincides with World Children's Day, celebrated on November 20, highlighting the importance of unifying views among religions and cultures to ensure the protection of children.

Pakistan launches nationwide anti-polio vaccination drive

- Pakistan on September 24, 2018 launched a massive nationwide anti-polio vaccination drive, which has been touted as the final push against the crippling disease to cover 38.6 million children less than five years of age.
- The drive will last for three days but a 2-5 day catchup campaign will be launched following the initial drive so that no one was left out.
- A country must have no cases for three consecutive years in order to be considered to have eradicated polio by the World Health Organisation.

Index

Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, MP awarded best-performing states in 'Ease of Living Index' 2018

- The state of Andhra Pradesh has topped the 'Ease of Living Index' rankings launched by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. It was followed by Odisha and Madhya Pradesh.
- The three states were awarded best-performing states at the National Dissemination Workshop on Ease of Living Index, 2018, which was held in Delhi on September 24, 2018.
- Speaking on the occasion, the Union Minister of State (I/C) for Housing and Urban Affairs, Hardeep Singh Puri said that the index is a transformative initiative of the Ministry to help the cities assess their liveability through national and global benchmarks.
- The Minister expressed confidence that the index will encourage cities to move towards an 'outcome-based' approach to urban planning and management and promote healthy competition among cities.

Obituaries

Former BCCI president BN Dutt passes away

- Former BCCI president Biswanath Dutt, best known in Indian cricket fraternity as Jagmohan Dalmiya's mentor, passed away on September 24, 2018 after suffering from acute lung infection. He was 92.
- He is survived by his daughter and son Subrata Dutta, who is the senior vice-president of All India Football Federation.
- Dutt was the BCCI president in 1989 after a six-year stint as the vice-president of the parent body from 1982-88.