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1. India-Bangladesh SAMPRITI-XI: Joint Military Exercise Begins (Oct. 4, 2023)

India and Bangladesh began the 11th edition of their annual joint military exercise, SAMPRITI, in Umroi, Meghalaya on October 3, 2023.

An Overview of the News

- SAMPRITI is organized by both countries on a rotation basis and is a symbol of their strong bilateral defense cooperation.
- Around 350 troops from India and Bangladesh will participate in SAMPRITI-XI and the exercise is scheduled to last for 14 days.
- SAMPRITI-XI consists of a **Command Post Exercise (CPX)** and a **Field Training Exercise (FTX)**.
- The CPX consists of 20 officials from each team and focuses on making decisions after thorough deliberations.
- FTX validates ground-level operations and includes joint tactical exercises for counter-terrorism operations, such as hostage rescue and crowd control measures.

Verification Exercises and 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' Tools:

- A validation exercise will be conducted at Darrang Field Firing Range in **Assam on October 14 and 15, 2023**.
- During this exercise, participants will see the capabilities of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' equipment highlighting indigenous manufacturing.

Strengthening Bilateral Relations:

- SAMPRITI-XI aims to **enhance defense cooperation between India and Bangladesh**.
- It promotes deeper bilateral relations, cultural understanding and mutual benefit through shared experiences in sub-traditional operations.
- The exercise emphasizes on improving interoperability, sharing tactical expertise and promoting best practices between the two armies.

About Bangladesh

- It is located in South Asia and is bordered by India to the north, east and west and Myanmar to the southeast.
- The country is home to several major rivers, including the Padma (Ganga), Meghna and Jamuna, which flow through the country and create fertile plains important for agriculture.

Capital - **Dhaka**

Currency - **Bangladeshi Taka**

Official Languages - **Bengali, English**

Prime Minister - **Sheikh Hasina**

2. India to unveil largest BR Ambedkar statue in Maryland, USA (Oct. 3, 2023)

India will unveil the largest statue of BR Ambedkar outside India in Maryland, North America on October 14.

An Overview of the News

- This project is organized by the Ambedkar International Center (AIC).
- The 19-foot statue, known as the "Statue of Equality", was created by renowned artist and sculptor Ram Sutar, who also created the statue of Sardar Patel in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- The statue of B.R. Ambedkar, an important figure in the Constitution of India, is located on 13 acres of land in the city of Accokeek, Maryland.

About Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar

- The 132nd birth anniversary of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was celebrated as Ambedkar Jayanti in India on April 14, 2023.
- Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was an Indian jurist, economist, and social reformer.
- He was the first Minister of Law and Justice of independent India and Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly.
- He was born in 1891 in a Dalit family.
- Ambedkar played an important role in drafting the Indian Constitution and was a strong advocate of social justice, equality and democracy.
- Dr. Ambedkar died in 1956.
- Some of his notable books: Annihilation of Caste, Buddha and His Dhamma, Who Were the Shudras?, Thoughts on Linguistic States, Pakistan or Partition of India, Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Origin and Development, Development of Provincial Finance in British India, Hindu Riddles in religion, and the untouchables: who were they and why did they become untouchables?

3. Union Minister Hardeep S Puri inaugurates India Pavilion at ADIPEC 2023 (Oct. 2, 2023)

Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri inaugurated the Indian Pavilion at the International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC 2023).

An Overview of the News

- The Indian pavilion is one of the 30 country pavilions at the event.

- Minister Puri also participated in bilateral discussions with industry leaders, including the interim CEO of British Petroleum and other key personalities.

ADIPEC 2023

- The Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC 2023) opened on October 2, 2023 at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre.
- ADIPEC will involve more than 160,000 people from 164 countries.
- The event will run until October 5 and focuses on the theme "Decarbonizing. Fast. Together".
- ADIPEC's goal is to bring together the global energy industry to advance decarbonization efforts in today's energy systems and collaborate on the energy future.

Highlights of the Event

- ADIPEC 2023 features more than 2,200 global companies across 16 exhibition halls.
- The event covers four specialized areas: Decarbonization Accelerator, Maritime and Logistics Sector, Digitalization in the Energy Sector, and Manufacturing and Industrialization Exhibition and Conference.
- Organized by Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), ADIPEC facilitates networking, business development and the exploration of new products, solutions and technologies.

Global Importance and Timeliness

- ADIPEC 2023 is strategically timed as it takes place ahead of the hosting of COP28 in the UAE, emphasizing the program's role in aligning the energy industry with low-carbon, high-growth energy solutions.
- Experts from diverse sectors within the energy ecosystem have gathered to address critical energy and climate challenges, making ADIPEC 2023 an important event for a more sustainable energy future.

4. Military Nursing Service celebrated 98th Foundation Day (Oct. 2, 2023)

The Military Nursing Service (MNS) celebrated its 98th Raising Day on October 1, 2023.

An Overview of the News

- MNS is recognized as one of the oldest and most prestigious women's services within the armed forces.
- Serving and retired MNS officers paid homage at the National War Memorial on September 30, 2023.

Social gathering and distinguished presence

- Additional DGMNS organized a social gathering at MNS Officers Mess, AH(R&R), New Delhi.
- The event was attended by over 300 guests including senior dignitaries from the three Services and experienced MNS officers.

Historical importance of MNS

- The origins of the MNS date back to the colonial era when British and Indian soldiers served in the British Army.
- In 1888, the Indian Army Nursing Service (IANS) was established, marking the formal beginning of military nursing in India.
- IANS officers played a vital role in providing medical care during the First and Second World Wars.
- On October 1, 1926, the Permanent Nursing Service was established and designated as the Indian Military Nursing Service.
- After Independence, the MNS became part of the Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS) and has since earned a reputation for dedication and exemplary service in both war and peace, making it one of the world's top nursing services known for its resilience and courage.

5. Dr. Mohammed Muizzu wins the Maldives presidential election (Oct. 2, 2023)

Dr. Mohammed Muizzu of the opposition PPM PNC alliance won the presidential election in Maldives with more than 53% of the votes.

An Overview of the News

- Ibrahim Mohamed Solih of the ruling MDP received 46% of the vote in the runoff, up from 39% in the first round, but he fell short of the 50% needed to win.
- The elections saw an improved turnout of 86% in the second round compared to 78% in the first.

About Maldives

- It is officially called the Republic of Maldives.
- It is located in the Indian Ocean.
- It is classified as an archipelagic state.
- This country is located in South Asia.
- Geographically, it is located south-west of Sri Lanka and India.
- Maldives is located about 750 kilometers from the mainland of the Asian continent.

Capital - **Male**

Currency - **Maldivian Rufiyaa**

Official language - **Dhivehi**

6. Iran's IRGC successfully launches Nour 3 Military Imaging Satellite into Orbit (Sept. 30, 2023)

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) successfully launched its third military imaging satellite, Nour 3, from Iran's Shahroud Spaceport.

An Overview of the News

- The satellite was sent into orbit using a three-stage cassette carrier, which was developed by the IRGC.
- In Persian, "**nour**" (or "**noor**") translates to "**light**", while "**Qased**" means "**messenger**".
- Nour 3 was placed in low Earth orbit (LEO) at an altitude of 450 km (280 mi) above the Earth's surface.
- The primary purpose of the Nour-3 satellite is to **collect data and images for intelligence purposes by the IRGC.**

Previous versions of the Noor satellite include:

- **Nour 1** - It was the first military reconnaissance satellite launched by Iran in April 2020. It orbited at an altitude of 425 km (265 mi) above the Earth.
- **Nour 2** - It launched in March 2022, and operated in a low orbit at an altitude of 500 km (310 mi).

Other satellites of Iran

- In August 2022, Iran's high-resolution, remote-sensing Khayyam satellite was launched using Russia's Soyuz-2.1B rocket. The launch took place from the Russian-controlled Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

About Iran

- President - **Ibrahim Raisi**
- Capital - **Tehran**
- Currency - **Iranian Rial**

7. FSSAI introduces 'special category' provision to promote gender equality in food industry (Sept. 30, 2023)

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) introduced a new provision called 'Special Category' in the FOSCOS portal.

An Overview of the News

- This provision aims **to promote gender equality and equal opportunities for women and transgender entrepreneurs in the food business sector.**
- Under this provision, licensing and registration authorities will give priority to 'special category' applications.
- Priority will be maintained in such a way that a one-to-one ratio is maintained between 'Special Category' applications and regular applications, unless there are no pending applications in any category.
- Persons belonging to 'Special Category' will be identified through Aadhaar/PAN (Permanent Account Number) authentication during the application submission process.

About FOSCOS (Food Safety Compliance System):

- FOSCOS was introduced by **FSSAI in 2020** as an upgraded version of the **Food Licensing and Registration System (FLRS)**, which was initially **launched in 2012.**
- It serves the purpose of issuing all India FSSAI licenses and registrations.
- FOSCOS is a cloud-based online platform designed to provide various services to food business operators (FBOs), including licensing, registration and regulatory compliance.

About Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI):

- FSSAI is a statutory body under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, established in the **year 2008 under the Food Safety and Standards Act 2006.**
- The current Chairman of FSSAI is **Sudhansh Pant.**
- It operates under the supervision of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.
- The headquarters of FSSAI is located in **New Delhi, Delhi.**

8. India and UN launch “India-UN Capacity Building Initiative” (Sept. 29, 2023)

India and the United Nations jointly launched the "India-United Nations Capacity Building Initiative".

An Overview of the News

- The India-UN Capacity Building Initiative aims to share India's development expertise with countries in the Global South.
- The initiative was officially announced during the “India-UN for the Global South – Delivering for Development” event held in New York on September 23, 2023.

- India's Foreign Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, and eminent personalities Dennis Francis, President of the 78th General Assembly, attended the event.
- This initiative builds on India's established bilateral cooperation in development and capacity building with partner countries.
- India's United Nations Development Partnership Fund has launched 75 development projects in 61 countries in the last six years, highlighting India's commitment to international development.

Strategic Partnership with Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation:

- Under this initiative, a strategic partnership has been formed between the UN India team and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- The partnership aims to utilize India's technical and economic cooperation platform to share India's development experiences and best practices with a global audience.
- A Joint Declaration of Intent has been exchanged to formalize this cooperation.

India's G20 Presidency aligns with goals:

- The "India-UN Capacity Building Initiative" aligns with the goals of India's G20 Presidency, including the G20 Action Plan.
- These objectives include accelerating progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), promoting technological transformation, and establishing digital public infrastructure, among other key priorities.

9. Taiwan unveils first domestic submarine 'Haikun' (Sept. 29, 2023)

Taiwan recently unveiled its first domestically built submarine "Haikun".

An Overview of the News

- It aims to enhance its defense capabilities amid the constant threat of a possible Chinese attack.
- Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen presided over the launch ceremony in Kaohsiung.
- Taiwan, officially the Republic of China, is a democratic island nation that China considers a rebel province.
- The enduring dispute over Taiwan's status has been a long-term source of regional tension, with China stressing its intention to reunify Taiwan with the mainland, even by force if necessary.

Importance of Taiwan's domestically built submarine

- The \$1.54 billion Haikun submarine is a diesel-electric powered ship that marks a substantial advance in Taiwan's defense capabilities.

- Taiwan aims to establish a fleet of 10 submarines, including two older Dutch-built submarines, all equipped with missiles.
- The purpose of this fleet expansion is to deter possible Chinese encirclement, invasion attempts, or naval blockade and act as a buffer until support from American and Japanese forces could be received.

10. MSME Ministry to lead Swachhta Hi Seva campaign on October 1, 2023 (Sept. 29, 2023)

The MSME Ministry will actively participate in the “One Date One Hour Ek Saath” initiative as part of the Swachhta Hi Seva campaign on October 1, 2023.

An Overview of the News

- The ministry has planned more than 200 programs for the **“One Date, One Hour, Together”** activity, which will be conducted by its subordinate organizations.
- Organizations such as the **National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC), Khadi and Village Industries (KVI), COIR Board, MGIRI-Wardha, NIMSME-Hyderabad, and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises- Development Facilitation Offices (MSME-DFOs)** will actively participate in this campaign.
- A Joint Secretary level nodal officer has been appointed to oversee the preparation and implementation of the entire campaign and its activities to be held on **October 1, 2023 across India.**
- The theme of Swachhata Hi Seva Abhiyan in 2023 is **“Garbage Free India”**.
- The Ministry is also actively pursuing the **Special Drive for Disposal of Pending Cases (SCDPM) 3.0** and Swachhta Hi Seva Abhiyaan, which will run from **September 15 to October 2, 2023.**