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1. One-Day Open House Consultation Organized by NHRC in Mumbai (Aug. 24, 2023)

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is hosting a one-day Open House Consultation in Mumbai on 25 August.

An Overview of the News

- The consultation focuses on the topic of health insurance for persons with disabilities.
- The event is a collaborative effort between NHRC, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), and the National Center for Promotion of Employment of Persons with Disabilities, Mumbai.
- The main objective of the conference is to understand the challenges faced by Persons with Disabilities (PWD) while seeking insurance from providers, especially for retail policies.
- It also aims to address the challenges faced by insurance companies in offering policies tailored to persons with disabilities and regulatory issues looked after by IRDAI.
- This program will explore the difficulties faced by the insurance industry in providing comprehensive insurance services to persons with disabilities.
- **The conference will be divided into two sessions:**
- Session 1: Identification of problems faced by persons with disabilities while seeking insurance facilities.
- Session 2: Identification of provisions and challenges faced by insurance companies in providing coverage to persons with disabilities along with possible solutions.
- The conference will be presided over by Dr. Dnyaneshwar Manohar Mulay, Member, NHRC.
- Joint Secretary Devendra Kumar Nim and other officers of NHRC will also participate in the conference.

2. Last survivors of the Amazon rainforest tribe Piripkura found in Brazil (Aug. 22, 2023)

Last-survivors-of-the-Amazon-rainforest-tribe-Piripkura-found-in-Brazil

Three remaining survivors of the Amazon rainforest tribe - Piripkura found in Brazil

An Overview of the News

- In the heart of the Amazon rainforest, the Piripkura tribe remains one of the last bastions of indigenous culture.
- Despite having only three remaining members, they are engaged in the struggle against impending threats such as deforestation from logging and mining activities.

Piripkura Tribe:

- The Piripkura tribe comes from the Mato Grosso region of Brazil and leads a nomadic lifestyle.
- Renowned for their reclusiveness, they strive to preserve their traditional lifestyle.
- This indigenous group has faced significant hardships due to the invasion of their lands by illegal logging, mining, and other exploitative activities.
- Their territory faces threats from deforestation and resource exploitation.

Key facts about the Amazon rainforest:

- The Amazon rainforest, an extensive tropical rainforest, covers the basin of the Amazon River and its tributaries in northern South America, covering a vast area of 2,300,000 square miles.
- Covering about 40% of Brazil's total land area, it is bordered by the Guiana Highlands to the north, the Andes Mountains to the west, the Brazilian Central Plateau to the south, and the Atlantic Ocean to the east.

Other tribes living in the Amazon rainforest:**Yanomami:**

- One of the largest indigenous groups in the Amazon.
- Residence in Brazil and Venezuela.

Kayapo:

- Found in Para and Mato Grosso, Brazil.
- Known for vibrant traditions like body painting and beadwork.

Ashaninka:

- Habitats of Peru and Brazil.
- Supporters of strong cultural identity and rights.
- The focus was on protecting the land from harvesting and illegal crops.

Tucano:

- Located in the upper Amazon in Brazil, Colombia, and Venezuela.
- Known for spiritual practices and rainforest wisdom.

Awa:

- One of the most endangered tribes of the Brazilian state of Maranhao.

Threatened by illegal logging and mining.

3. Indian Coast Guard and Philippine Coast Guard sign MoU to strengthen maritime cooperation (Aug. 22, 2023)

The Indian Coast Guard and the Philippine Coast Guard have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen their maritime cooperation.

An Overview of the News

- The objective of the MoU is to enhance bilateral maritime cooperation between the two countries with a focus on ensuring safe, secure, and clean seas in the region.
- The MoU was signed in New Delhi by Rakesh Pal, Director General of, the Indian Coast Guard, and Admiral Artemio M. Abu, Commandant of, the Philippine Coast Guard.
- The two sides held their inaugural bilateral meeting after the signing of the MoU, addressing a range of maritime issues.

Areas of Focus: The key areas of cooperation under the MoU include:

1. Maritime Law Enforcement: Strengthening cooperation in the enforcement of maritime laws.
2. Maritime Search and Rescue: To enhance joint efforts in search and rescue operations at sea.
3. Marine Pollution Response: Collaborating to respond effectively to marine pollution incidents.

Delegation visit: A five-member delegation of the Philippine Coast Guard is on an official visit to India from 20 August to 24 August.

4. India New Car Assessment Program (India NCAP) launched (Aug. 21, 2023)

On August 22, 2023, Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari will launch the India New Car Assessment Program (Bharat NCAP).

An Overview of the News

- This initiative represents significant progress in the commitment of the Government of India to enhance road safety.
- The primary focus is on raising safety standards for motor vehicles weighing up to 3.5 tonnes across India.
- The central goal of the program is to equip car customers with a valuable tool to compare the crash safety features of various motor vehicles available in the market.

Voluntary Participation by Car Manufacturers:

- Car manufacturers have the option of voluntarily submitting their vehicles for testing as per the Automotive Industry Standard (AIS) 197.
- The test results will determine star ratings in two categories: Adult Occupant (AOP) and Child Occupant (COP).

Informed Purchase Decision:

- Potential car buyers can refer to these star ratings to measure and compare the safety standards of different vehicles.
- This information will play a vital role in helping customers make an informed decision before purchasing a vehicle.

5. Central Water Commission Chairman launches "Floodwatch" mobile app for real-time flood forecasts (Aug. 19, 2023)

Central-Water-Commission-Chairman-launches-Floodwatch-mobile-app-for-real-time-flood-forecasts

Central Water Commission (CWC) Chairman Kushwinder Vohra launched the "Floodwatch" mobile application.

An Overview of the News

- The objective of the "Floodwatch" mobile app is to disseminate real-time flood information and forecasts up to 7 days to the public through mobile phones.
- User-friendly app developed in-house with readable and audio transmission available in English and Hindi.

Key Features of "Floodwatch" App:

- Users can check the current flood conditions across the country in real-time.
- The app collects river flow data in real-time from various sources.
- Provides flood forecast (24 hours) or flood advisory (7 days) of Central Water Commission.
- Users can directly select stations on the map or search by station name.
- The map zooms in on the station location when selected from the dropdown menu.
- Users can access flood forecasts or advisories (24 hours or 7 days).
- Select Options: Specific Station, State, or Basin from the dropdown menu.
- The app is accessible on Android devices through the Google Play Store; the iOS version coming soon.

Advanced Technologies Employed:

- "Floodwatch" uses satellite data analysis, mathematical modeling, and real-time monitoring.
- Its objective is to provide accurate and timely flood forecasts.

6. Anwarul Haq Kakar sworn in as the 8th Interim Prime Minister of Pakistan (Aug. 17, 2023)

Anwarul-Haq-Kakar-sworn-in-as-the-8th-Interim-Prime-Minister-of-Pakistan

Ethnic Pashtun leader Anwarul Haq Kakar was sworn in as the 8th Caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan, becoming the youngest person to hold the role.

An Overview of the News

- President Arif Alvi administered the oath of office to Anwarul Haq Kakar in a simple ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan. Distinguished attendees include outgoing Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and prominent leaders.
- Kakar formally resigned from the Senate and the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), strengthening his commitment to the neutrality expected in his current position.
- The Senate Chairman has accepted Kakar's resignation as per Article 64, Clause (1) of the Constitution of Pakistan.

Anwar Ul Haq Kakar: Background and Political Journey

- Ethnic identity and party affiliation: Kakar, an ethnic Pashtun, is affiliated with the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP).
- Birthplace and political entry: Hailing from the provincial capital Quetta, Kakar entered politics in the late 21st century.
- Experience as Spokesperson: In a previous role, he served as the spokesperson for the Balochistan Provincial Administration in 2013 and gained valuable insight into regional governance.
- Senate tenure and election: Anwar ul Haq Kakar assumed a position in the Pakistani Senate as a senator in March 2018.
- He secured this seat in the 2018 Pakistani Senate elections as an independent candidate representing Balochistan through a general seat.

Chief of the Army Staff of Pakistan - General Asim Munir

7. 77th Indian Independence Day 2023 (Aug. 17, 2023)

77th-Indian-Independence-Day-2023

India celebrated its 77th Independence Day **on August 15, 2023, with the theme "Nation First, Always First".**

An Overview of the News

- The theme "Nation First, Always First" emphasizes national integration and development, reflecting the government's priorities.
- This festival highlights the diverse culture and unity of India.

Programs on 77th Indian Independence Day:

- Independence Day celebrates the independence and unity of India.
- The Prime Minister hoists the flag at the Red Fort, which is followed by celebrations across the country.
- A military parade at Rajpath showcases the might of the Indian Armed Forces.
- Cultural programs showcase the rich heritage of India through music, dance, and drama.
- Commemorative events include postage stamps, coins, and religious ceremonies.
- Public celebrations include patriotic songs, dances, and the distribution of sweets.

History of Independence Day 2023:

- Indian Independence Day has its roots in the rise of the independence movement in the 19th century.
- Leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, and Bose led the movement against British rule.
- India gained independence on August 15, 1947, when the Indian Independence Act of 1947 came into effect.
- The first Independence Day was celebrated in 1947 with Nehru's iconic flag-hoisting speech.
- The date marks the culmination of the long struggle for independence and is a national holiday to honor the sacrifices.

Major events leading to India's independence:

- 1857-1858: The Indian Mutiny (Sepoy Mutiny) against British rule highlights discontent and a desire for change.
- 1885: Formation of the Indian National Congress (INC) to advocate for Indian representation in the government.
- 1905: Protests against the partition of Bengal reflect opposition to British policies.
- 1919: The Jallianwala Bagh massacre sparked outrage and strengthened nationalist sentiment.
- 1920-1922: Non-cooperation movement led by Gandhiji encouraged the boycott of British institutions.
- 1930-1934: The Civil Disobedience Movement challenges the Salt Laws and promotes nonviolent resistance.

- 1930s: Constitutional reforms for India were discussed at the Round Table Conference in London.
- 1942: The Quit India Movement led by Gandhiji demanded the end of British rule.
- 1942-1945: Participation in World War II and the formation of the Indian National Army (INA) ignited Indian aspirations.
- 1947: India was partitioned due to the Mountbatten plan and independence was achieved on 15 August.
- 1947: Partition resulted in communal violence and displacement.

8. Pibot: Humanoid Robot for Airplane Piloting (Aug. 17, 2023)

Pibot-Humanoid-Robot-for-Airplane-Piloting

The Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) is making advances in aviation through the creation of the "Pibot".

An Overview of the News

- Pibot is a humanoid robot designed to autonomously fly aircraft using advanced AI capabilities and its own dexterity.

Revolutionizing Aviation and Beyond:

- Pibot aims to revolutionize aviation by enabling autonomous flight in existing aircraft, without the need for cockpit modifications.
- By mimicking human pilot actions and decisions, Pibot aims to usher in a new era of automated aviation.

Unrivalled Control Precision:

- The Pibot has state-of-the-art robotic arms and fingers with high-precision control mechanisms.
- It excels in handling flight instruments and managing cockpit switches even under challenging conditions like intense vibrations.

Advanced AI Capabilities:

- Pibot uses artificial intelligence to understand and retain complex flight manuals presented in everyday language.
- It surpasses even human pilots by memorizing extensive sets of Jeppesen aeronautical navigation charts, a feat well beyond human capability.

9. Union Home Minister Amit Shah launches digital portal to promote cooperative movement in Maharashtra (Aug. 7, 2023)

Union Home Minister and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah launched the digital portal of the Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies (CRCS) office in Pune, Maharashtra.

An Overview of the News

- Cooperative culture in India originated from Maharashtra, and the cooperative model of Maharashtra is driving the cooperative movement in the country.
- The digital portal will enable all operations of cooperative societies, such as opening new branches, expanding to other states or auditing, to be conducted online.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Sahakar se Samridhhi" aims to provide basic amenities to lakhs of poor people of the country
- The Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2022 aims to increase transparency, accountability and eliminate nepotism in cooperatives, allowing young talent to join the movement.
- The portal will benefit 1555 multi-state cooperatives, of which 42% are located in Maharashtra, highlighting the strength of the cooperative movement in the state.
- The government is planning to computerise the offices of registrar of cooperatives in states to ease communication with 8 lakh cooperatives in the country.
- The Modi government aims to make Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) viable and plans to form 3 lakh new PACS across the country in the next 5 years.
- The government is building a cooperative university and a national cooperative database to enhance technical education in the cooperative sector.
- Three new multi-state cooperatives have been set up to assist in marketing of organic produce and seed production, which will benefit over 10 crore farmers in the country.
- The government's vision is to contribute towards making India a \$5 trillion economy and the world's third largest economy with a significant contribution from the cooperative sector.

About Maharashtra

- It is a state located in the western part of India and covers a significant part of the Deccan Plateau.
- Chief Minister - Eknath Shinde
- Governor - Ramesh Bais
- Official Animal - Indian giant squirrel
- Official Bird - Yellow-footed Green Pigeon
- Official Dance - Lavani

10. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS) in 13 railway stations through video link (Aug. 7, 2023)

On 6 July 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme (ABSS) through a video link from Delhi, which aims to revitalise 1,309 railway stations across India and turn them into world-class travel hubs.

An Overview of the News

- ABSS will start its rejuvenation work at 508 railway stations in different states with an investment of ₹25,000 crore. In the state, 13 railway stations will be modernised with an investment of ₹303 crore.

List of Stations under ABSS in the State:

- ABSS will focus on 13 railway stations in a specific state.
- These selected stations will receive a modern makeover and substantial investment as part of ABSS.
- The 13 railway stations selected for ABSS in the state are Ballari, Ghataprabha, Gokak Road, Bidar, Alnavar, Gadag, Koppal, Harihar, Arsikere, Mangaluru Junction, Wadi, Kalaburagi Junction (Gulbarga), and Shahabad.

Features of Revamped Stations:

- The revamped railway stations will provide world class amenities.
- Key features include rooftop plaza, shopping zone, food court, children's play area and separate entry and exit gates.
- Multi-level parking, lifts and escalators, executive lounge, waiting area and travelators will also be included.
- Facilities to meet the needs of the physically challenged shall be provided.
- The integration of these facilities is expected to enhance the passenger experience and make the stations iconic landmarks in their respective cities.
- Additionally, the stations will become hubs of socio-economic activities in their areas due to better multimodal connectivity.

Railway Minister of India - Ashwini Vaishnav