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1. International Day of Parliamentarism - 30 June (June 30, 2023)

International-Day-of-Parliamentarism---30-June

June 30 is recognized as the **International Day of Parliamentarism**, which commemorates the founding of the **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in 1889**.

An overview of the news

- This day holds significance as it provides an opportunity to acknowledge and appreciate the progress made by parliaments worldwide in achieving their predetermined goals.
- This year's theme is '**Parliaments for the Planet**', which urges parliaments around the world to lead by example in building a greener and more sustainable future.

Purpose of the day

- The goals of the International Day of Parliamentarism encompass several key aspects, including self-assessment and evaluation of parliamentary performance.
- Another focus is on promoting the participation of **women and young Members of Parliament (MPs)** to ensure diverse representation and inclusivity within parliamentary institutions.

Background of the day

- The **United Nations General Assembly** adopted a resolution in **2018** to establish the International Day of Parliamentarism, emphasizing the importance of parliamentary institutions in democratic governance.
- The **Inter-Parliamentary Union** was **founded in 1889**, and the inaugural celebration of the UN International Day of Parliamentarism took place **in 1899** to mark its establishment.
- The day serves as a platform to reflect on the achievements and challenges faced by parliaments globally and to foster dialogue and cooperation among parliamentary bodies.

2. UN chief appoints Xu Haoliang of China as deputy head of UNDP (June 29, 2023)

UN-chief-appoints-Xu-Haoliang-of-China-as-deputy-head-of-UNDP

UN Secretary-General **Antonio Guterres** has announced the appointment of **Xu Haoliang from China** as the new **Undersecretary-General and Associate Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP)**.

An overview of the news

- Xu Haoliang will succeed **Usha Rao-Monari** from India in this role.
- Xu has been serving as the **UN Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support** at the UNDP since 2019.

- Prior to that, from 2013 to 2019, he held the position of **UNDP Assistant Administrator** and **Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific**.
- He has worked in various capacities within the United Nations, undertaking assignments both in the field and at headquarters in regions such as **Asia-Pacific, Europe, and Central Asia**.
 - Before joining the United Nations, Xu worked in the field of **civil engineering** in China and the United States.
 - His academic qualifications include a bachelor's degree in engineering from Tongji University in China, a master's degree in management science from the Stevens Institute of Technology in the United States, and a master's degree in international affairs from Columbia University.
 - Xu is proficient in **Chinese, English, and Russian**.

About The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

- It is the leading agency of the **United Nations**.
- It works to **eradicate poverty and reduce inequality in 170 countries** and territories.
- It helps countries to develop **policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities, institutional capabilities**, and to build resilience to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Its work is concentrated in three focus areas; **sustainable development, democratic governance and peace building, and climate and disaster resilience**.

3. Parshottam Rupala launched NANDI Portal (June 27, 2023)

Union Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Parshottam Rupala on 26th June at **Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi** launched **NANDI** (NOC Approvals for New Drugs & Inoculation System).

An overview of the news

- The **NANDI portal** has been developed to digitize and streamline the regulatory approval process in **India's Animal Health Sector**.
- The development of the NANDI portal was carried out in collaboration with the **Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) and the Center for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC)**.
- The portal aligns with the vision of **Digital India** and embodies the principles of **Minimum Government and Maximum Governance** by leveraging IT systems.
- The primary objective of the portal is to **expedite the assessment and examination of veterinary product proposals**, ensuring their safety, efficacy, and essentiality.

- The Minister emphasized the transformative impact of the portal and the government's decision to launch **Mobile Veterinary Units**, which will contribute to vaccinating all livestock in the country.
- The NANDI portal is expected to support the development of India as a **global manufacturing hub for veterinary products** and encourage research and development efforts to enhance animal health.

4. Global Gender Gap Index 2023 (June 24, 2023)

Global-Gender-Gap-Index-2023

India ranks 127 out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index 2023.

An Overview of the News

- The Global Gender Gap Index was **established in 2006** and this is **its 17th edition**.
- It is published annually by the **World Economic Forum (WEF)**.
- It measures gender equality in **146 countries** and enables cross-country analysis.

Global Gender Gap Score:

- The global gender gap score for **2023 is 68.4%**, showing an improvement of **0.3 percentage** points from **last year**.
- None of the countries included in the index have achieved full gender equality.
- The top 9 **countries including Iceland, Norway, Finland and New Zealand have reduced the gender gap by 80%**.

Iceland: The most gender-equal country:

- Iceland has been ranked first as the most gender-equal country in the world for the **14th consecutive year with a score of 91.2%**.
- Iceland is the only country that has reduced the gender gap by **more than 90%**.

Progress of South Asia:

- In South Asia, the gender gap score has increased by 1.1 percentage points since the last edition.
- Among India's neighbouring countries, **Pakistan is at 142, Bangladesh at 59, China at 107, Nepal at 116, Sri Lanka at 115 and Bhutan at 103.**

India's ranking and progress:

- India has moved up 8 places to rank **127 out of 146 countries in the 2023 Global Gender Gap Index.**

India has shown an improvement of **1.4 percentage points from the 2022 figures.**

- **Education and Economic Participation:**

- India has achieved parity in enrollment at all levels of education, reducing the overall gender gap by 64.3%.
- However, India has reached only 36.7% equality in economic participation.
- India was ranked 135 in the 2022 edition.

- **Representation in senior positions and technical roles:**

- Despite increases in pay and income equality, the representation of women in senior positions and technical roles in India has decreased slightly since the last edition.

- **Political Empowerment:**

- India recorded 25.3% equality in terms of political empowerment.
- Women represent 15.1% of parliamentarians, the highest figure for the country since 2006.

- **Women's representation in local government:**

- Of the 117 countries with available data from 2017, 18 have achieved more than 40% female representation in local governance, including Bolivia, India and France.

- **Improvement in sex ratio at birth:**

- The report highlights India's progress with an improvement in the sex ratio at birth by 1.9 percentage points, bringing equality after a decade of slow progress.

Global Gender Gap Index 2023 Ranking

1. Iceland - 0.912
2. Norway - 0.879
3. Finland - 0.863
4. New Zealand - 0.856
5. Sweden - 0.815
6. Germany - 0.815
7. Nicaragua - 0.811
8. Namibia - 0.802
9. Lithuania - 0.800
10. Belgium - 0.796

5. UNDP partners with DAY-NULM towards empowering women entrepreneurs (June 21, 2023)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and the **Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM)** recently have joined forces in a collaborative partnership.

An overview of the news

- The objective of this partnership is **to empower women to make career choices** in the field of entrepreneurship.
- The partnership aims to provide support to women who are interested in starting or expanding their own enterprises.
- It focuses on sectors such as the care **economy, digital economy, electric mobility, waste management, food packaging**, and more.

Entrepreneurship Development and Enterprise Growth

- The project, which spans three years and is **extendable beyond 2025**, is centered around fostering entrepreneurship development and accelerating enterprise growth.
- In the initial phase, it will cover **eight cities**.

On-Ground Mobilization and Business Development Services

- UNDP and DAY-NULM will work together to engage in on-ground mobilization activities.
- This includes identifying areas of urban poverty and potential entrepreneurs.

About The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

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- Its work is concentrated in three focus areas; **sustainable development, democratic governance and peace building, and climate and disaster resilience**.

6. Kerala launched the Kerala Fibre Optical Network (KFON) (June 9, 2023)

Kerala-Fibre-Optic-Network-(KFON)

The **Kerala government** June 5 officially launched the **Kerala Fibre Optical Network (KFON)**, one of its flagship projects envisaged during the first term of Chief Minister **Pinarayi Vijayan**.

An overview of the news

- Through KFON, Kerala, which is the first state to declare the right to internet as a **fundamental right**, aims to bridge the digital divide by ensuring high-speed broadband internet access to all households and government offices.
- It also aims to promote e-governance and accelerate **Kerala's journey towards becoming a knowledge-based economy**.

What is Kerala Fibre Optic Network (KFON)?

- In the first phase of KFON, the government will provide connectivity to **30,000 government offices and 14,000 BPL households** in the state.
- Till June 5, connectivity has been provided to 17,412 government offices and 2,105 households and a cable network has been laid to provide connections to 9,000 households.
- Kerala Vision Broadband, an initiative of cable TV operators, is providing internet service in many districts of Kerala.
- Private service providers will also benefit from KFON's infrastructure as they can use its cable network.
- Internet connectivity to the households will be provided by the local ISP/TSP/Cable TV providers.

Stakeholders of KFON

- The Rs 1,611-crore KFON project is a joint venture between the **Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB)** and the **Kerala State IIT Infrastructure Limited**.
- The project was announced in 2017 but work **started in 2019**.
- The project implementation was done by a consortium led by **Central PSU Bharat Electronics Limited**.
- **PricewaterhouseCoopers** is the advisor to the project.
- **Kerala State Information Technology Infrastructure Ltd (KSITIL)** would be responsible for the operations and maintenance of the project.
- **Bharat Electronics (BEL)** is the system integrator for the KFON project.
- The project is fully funded by **Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB)**.

7. 1st India-Namibia Joint Commission of Cooperation (June 6, 2023)

External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** recently **co-chaired** the **first India-Namibia Joint Commission** with Namibian Foreign Minister **Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah** in **Windhoek**.

An overview of the news

- In his opening remarks, Dr. Jaishankar highlighted the special place Namibia holds in the hearts of Indians.
- He emphasized that India supports Namibian independence and expressed happiness at Namibia's rightful place in the international community.
- Dr. Jaishankar underlined the **strong bond between India and Namibia**, which is characterized by developmental cooperation, capacity building programs and political solidarity.
- The Joint Commission will assess the progress of India-Namibia relations. In addition, high-level visits and ongoing interactions will strengthen the **India-Namibia partnership** in the future.
- During his visit, the External Affairs Minister inaugurated the **India-Namibia Center of Excellence in Information Technology** in Windhoek. The center will contribute to research, cyber security and good governance.

About Namibia

- Namibia is a country located in **southwestern Africa**, bordering the **Atlantic Ocean** to the west.
- It shares borders with **Angola, Zambia, Botswana and South Africa**.
- The country's diverse geography includes the **Namib Desert** along the **Atlantic coast**, the **Kalahari Desert** to the east, and the **central plateau**.
- Namibia gained independence from South Africa on **March 21, 1990**, becoming the last African country to gain independence from colonial rule.
- **Windhoek is the capital and largest city of Namibia.**
- Namibia is known for its stunning **natural landscapes and diverse wildlife**.
- **Etosha National Park**, located in the north of the country, is a popular destination for wildlife enthusiasts, offering the chance to see **elephants, lions, giraffes, rhinos** and various bird species.

8. BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Cape Town (June 3, 2023)

brics Nations

BRICS countries kicked off its **foreign ministers meeting on 1st June in Cape Town**, the legislative capital of South Africa.

An overview of the news

- External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** participated in the meeting of foreign ministers of **BRICS countries**.
- **South Africa**, which currently holds the **chair of the bloc**, hosted the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Cape Town on 1-2 June.

- The foreign ministers' meeting will finalise the agenda for the **15th BRICS summit scheduled to be held in South Africa in August.**
- It is believed that 19 countries are in line to join BRICS.

Joint Agreement

- The BRICS foreign ministers agreed BRICS cooperation should be strengthened to promote unity among developing countries.
- Advance the global governance system reform.
- Accelerate the realization of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.
- Contribute to world peace and development.

About BRICS

- The full form of BRICS is **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.**
- Goldman Sachs economist **Jim O'Neill** coined the term **BRIC (without South Africa) in 2001.**
- He claimed that by 2050, the four BRIC economies would dominate the **global economy by 2050.**
- **South Africa** was included in the list in **2010.**
- The presidency of the Forum is rotated annually among the members.
- BRICS accounts for about **40% of the world's population.**
- It accounts for **30% of the world's GDP** (Gross Domestic Product).
- In the year 2014, during the 6th BRICS Summit in Fortaleza, Brazil, the BRICS leaders signed an agreement to establish a **New Development Bank (NDB).**

9. New Liberation War Gallery Inaugurated at the Indian Cultural Centre in Dhaka (May 31, 2023)

New-Liberation-War-Gallery-Inaugurated-at-the-Indian-Cultural-Centre-in-Dhaka
On 30 May a new **Liberation War Gallery of 1971** was inaugurated at the **Indian Cultural Center of the Indian High Commission in Dhaka.**

An overview of the news

- Bangladesh Home Minister **Asaduzzaman Khan** was the chief guest on the occasion.
- India's High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma joins **Home Minister in inauguration of Liberation War Gallery**

- The War Gallery houses some rare photographs of the **Liberation War of 1971**, which culminated in the liberation of then East Pakistan and its rise as the newest nation of South Asian countries.
- The inaugural program was attended by many freedom fighters, Bir Muktijodha, and distinguished guests, including many eminent personalities of Bangladesh, representatives of the cultural and educational fields of Bangladesh, and youth.
- The gallery displays heroic photographs and documents from the Bangladesh Liberation **War of 1971** as a testament to the enduring bond of friendship between India and Bangladesh.
- It pays tribute to the brave freedom fighters who fought against oppression and tyranny.
- The gallery honors the memory of the unknown millions who laid down their lives during the **Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971**.

Liberation War of 1971

- In the 1950s, Pakistan was ruled by a military-bureaucratic rule that ruled the entire **country (East and West Pakistan)** in an undemocratic manner.
- The Bengalites had no political representation in this system of governance.
- This dominance of West Pakistan was challenged by the Bengalis during the general elections of 1970.
- In the general election of **1970, the Awami League of East Pakistan's Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** got a clear majority.
- West Pakistan was not ready for any leader of East Pakistan to rule the country.
- On **March 26, 1971**, West Pakistan launched Operation Searchlight in East Pakistan.
- As a result, lakhs of Bangladeshis had to take refuge in India.
- The Pakistani army had to face defeat due to the bravery of the '**Muktiwahini Sena**' and Indian soldiers who fought for the independence of Bangladesh.
- On 6 December 1971, a new nation Bangladesh was born out of 13 days of war with the intervention of India.

10. Kerala becomes India's first fully e-governed state (May 25, 2023)

Kerala-becomes-India's-first-fully-e-governed-state

The state has achieved this feat through **policy initiatives** aimed at transforming it into a **digitally empowered society**.

An Overview of the News

- The government focused on setting up a knowledge-based economy and achieving **100% digital literacy**.

- Important services across various sectors were digitized to ensure transparency, inclusiveness and accessibility for all citizens.
- E-governance in Kerala has streamlined service delivery, reducing bureaucratic bottlenecks and delays.
- Online portals and mobile applications have been launched for citizens to interact with government departments and access services easily.
- Integration of technology in the education and healthcare sectors has been a priority, with digital learning platforms and telemedicine services being implemented.

About Kerala

Capital - **Thiruvananthapuram**

Official Bird - **Great Hornbill**

Governor - **Arif Mohammad Khan**

Chief Minister - **Pinarayi Vijayan**

Origin of rivers in Kerala

- Periyar River
- Bharathapuzha River
- Pamba River
- Chaliyar River
- Chalakudy River

India's longest lake - **Vembanad, Kerala**