

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

> 20 & 21 OCTOBER 2025

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. UIDAI launches 'Scheme for Innovation and Technology Association with Aadhaar (SITAA)' to Strengthen India's Digital Identity Ecosystem.



On October 16, 2025, the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) launched the Scheme for Innovation and Technology Association with Aadhaar (SITAA) to promote innovation, research, and collaboration in digital identity technologies aligned with the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).

- The SITAA scheme aims to foster innovation by bringing together startups, academic institutions, and industries to co-develop secure, scalable, and future-ready identity (ID) technologies, reinforcing India's leadership in digital identity management.
- SITAA emphasizes advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI), data privacy, authentication mechanisms, and biometric systems. It focuses on developing indigenous technologies to enhance security, accessibility, and reliability of Aadhaar-enabled identity systems.
- The initiative encourages joint innovation through partnerships among UIDAI, industry experts, and academia. This collaboration seeks to create globally competitive digital identity

solutions rooted in indigenous research and innovation.

Key Points:-

- UIDAI launched three key innovation challenges — Face Liveness Detection, Presentation Attack Detection (PAD), and Contactless Fingerprint Authentication. These aim to improve biometric accuracy, detect deepfakes, and enhance identity verification using smartphone cameras.
- Under the Face Liveness Detection and PAD challenges, startups and academic teams will develop AI/ML-based Software Development Kits (SDKs) capable of identifying fake, morphed, or replayed biometric data, ensuring stronger protection against identity fraud.
- A MoU was signed between UIDAI, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Startups Hub (MSH), and the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) as strategic partners to implement SITAA's objectives and nurture innovation in India's digital identity ecosystem.

2. IndiGo Partners with Digi Yatra to Introduce Seamless App-to-App Integration for Contactless Boarding.



In October 2025, IndiGo, one of India's leading airlines, partnered with Digi Yatra, a Self-Sovereign Identity (SSI) ecosystem, to provide passengers with a smooth, contactless, and paperless boarding experience through advanced digital integration.

- The collaboration aims to simplify air travel by offering contactless, paperless boarding and enhancing passenger convenience using Digi Yatra's digital identity framework integrated directly within the IndiGo mobile application.

- Through seamless Application-to-Application (App-to-App) integration, passengers can now share their boarding passes effortlessly by selecting the "Share with Digi Yatra" option in the IndiGo app, eliminating the need for manual or paper-based verification.

Key Points:-

(i) The new system leverages face biometric technology and offline deep linking to ensure a fast, secure, and reliable boarding process, improving efficiency and reducing waiting times at airport checkpoints.

(ii) The partnership emphasizes data privacy and user consent, ensuring all digital identity processes comply with stringent data protection standards while maintaining real-

time accuracy and security.

(iii) This integration supports India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) framework and aligns with the Ministry of Civil Aviation's (MoCA) vision to promote technology-driven, passenger-centric innovation in the aviation sector.

INTERNATIONAL

1. Indian Air Force Rises to 3rd Most Powerful Air Force in WDMMA Rankings 2025.



In October 2025, the World Directory of Modern Military Aircraft (WDMMA), an authoritative annual ranking of global air forces, released its WDMMA Rankings for 2025. The report evaluates air forces worldwide based on overall effectiveness, capability, and TruVal Rating (TVR), highlighting the strongest and weakest military aviation powers.

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) surpassed China's People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) to become the world's 3rd most powerful air force in terms of overall effectiveness. Despite this, in terms of TVR, IAF ranks 6th globally with a score of 69.4, while China ranks 7th with a TVR of 58.1.

● The United States Air Force leads the rankings with a TVR of 242.9, operating 5,004 aircraft, followed by the US Navy (TVR 142.4, 2,504 units) and the Russian Air Force (TVR 114.2, 3,677 aircraft).

Key Points:-

(i) The Japan Air Self-Defence Force (JASDF) ranks 8th with a TVR of 58.1, followed by the Israeli Air Force (9th, TVR 56.3), French Air Force (10th, TVR 55.3), and the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force (RAF) (11th, TVR 55.3), showing a concentration of strong air capabilities among advanced nations.

(ii) The report also identifies the least powerful air forces globally. The bottom five include Afghanistan (107th, TVR 0.3), Syria (106th, TVR 3.6), Albania (105th, TVR 3.9), Yemen (104th, TVR 5.2), and Bosnia & Herzegovina (103rd, TVR 5.8), highlighting significant disparities in air power worldwide.

(iii) Among India's neighbours, Pakistan's air force ranks 18th with a TVR of 46.3, while Bangladesh is positioned 83rd with a TVR of 14.1, indicating that IAF maintains a substantial qualitative and quantitative advantage in the region.



In October 2025, India and the European Union (EU) conducted a first-of-its-kind counterterrorism training focused on drone threats at the National Security Guard (NSG) campus in Manesar, Gurugram, Haryana. The three-day exercise strengthened capabilities to defend critical infrastructure and soft targets against emerging unmanned aerial system (UAS) threats.

● The recently conducted three-day EU-India exercise, held from October 13–15, 2025, aimed to enhance protection of critical infrastructure and soft targets against drone threats through tactical, technological, and joint simulation-based training.

● The training involved India's NSG and the EU's High Risk Security Network (HRSN), representing 28 units from 21 EU member states, who conducted joint urban counter-drone and tactical operations.

Key Points:-

(i) The exercise emphasized advanced counter-UAS technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based solutions, sensor fusion, directed energy systems, kinetic measures, and joint tactical drills to address future drone threats effectively.

(ii) The training resulted in the creation of

2. India and EU Conduct First-Ever Counter-Drone Training at NSG Campus.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for integrated drone and counter-drone operations, as well as an Engagement Decision Matrix to secure mass gatherings and critical infrastructure against unmanned aerial threats.

3. India Ranks Lowest in Mercer CFA Institute Global Pension Index (MCGPI) 2025.



In October 2025, Mercer, in collaboration with Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute and Monash Centre for Financial Studies (MCFS), released the 17th edition of the Mercer CFA Institute Global Pension Index (MCGPI) 2025. The report evaluated retirement income systems of 52 countries, representing 65% of the world's population, highlighting global pension performance and key improvements.

- India ranked 52nd, the lowest among all countries in the MCGPI 2025, with an overall score of 43.8 out of 100, slightly down from 44.0 in 2024. The country received an overall index grade of “D,” alongside Turkiye (48.2), the Philippines (47.1), and Argentina (45.9), which are also in Group D.

- The Netherlands secured the top position in the index with a score of 85.4, followed by

Iceland at 84.0 and Denmark at 82.3. Other Grade A pension leaders include Singapore and Israel. The Netherlands is notable for transitioning from a collective pension system to a Defined-Contribution (DC) structure under the Future Pension Act.

- Singapore achieved an overall score of 80.0, becoming the first Asian country to attain a Grade A ranking.

Key Points:-

(i) The MCGPI 2025 reported improvements in eight countries' grades. Chile and Sweden advanced to B+, Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region, SAR) to B, Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia to B, Malaysia to C+, South Africa to C, and Singapore to A. Notably, no country's grade was downgraded in the 2025 report.

(ii) The 2025 edition introduced four new countries: Kuwait (score 71.9, Grade B), Namibia (59.1, Grade C), Oman (60.9, Grade C+), and Panama (59.1, Grade C). Kuwait stood out as a new entrant by leading the “Adequacy” sub-index with a score of 86.6, demonstrating strong retirement income provision.

(iii) In addition to overall rankings, the MCGPI 2025 highlighted sub-index leaders in key pension dimensions. Kuwait leads the Adequacy sub-index (86.6), Iceland tops the Sustainability sub-index (85.7), and Finland leads the Integrity sub-index (90.6), reflecting global best practices in pension adequacy, long-term sustainability, and system governance.

BANKING & FINANCE

1. HSBC and Juspay Collaborate to Launch First-of-Its-Kind Acquiring Platform for Digital Merchants.



In October 2025, HSBC Holdings plc, a leading global banking and financial services organisation, partnered with Juspay Technologies Private Limited, a top payments infrastructure company, to launch a first-of-its-kind acquiring platform designed for digital-first, global merchants. The platform aims to streamline payments and enhance transaction efficiency.

- The recently launched platform consolidates the entire payment value chain, enabling merchants to access multiple payment methods through a single provider, simplifying operations and improving user experience.
- The platform offers a seamless, customized checkout experience, smart transaction routing, access to local payment methods, advanced fraud protection, efficient chargeback handling, simplified reconciliation, and robust real-time monitoring and control for merchants.

Key Points:-

- (i) This full-stack solution integrates HSBC's global banking network with Juspay's advanced payment infrastructure, enabling

faster processing, higher transaction success rates, and a more reliable payments ecosystem for merchants.

- (ii) The partnership represents a significant step in supporting global digital commerce, particularly for merchants seeking scalable, secure, and flexible payment solutions in an increasingly digital-first market environment.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

1. Gujarat Cabinet Expanded to 26 Members under CM Bhupendra Patel.



In October 2025, the state government of Gujarat, led by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, expanded its cabinet by inducting 19 new ministers and retaining 6, increasing the total strength from 17 to 26. The expansion reflects political consolidation and strategic appointments in the state government.

- The oath of office and secrecy was administered to 21 ministers, including 19 new inductees, by Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat at Raj Bhavan in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, in a formal ceremony marking the cabinet expansion.
- The swearing-in ceremony was attended by prominent leaders including BJP National President and Union Minister Jagat Parkash (JP)

Nadda (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, MoHFW), Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya (Ministry of Labour & Employment, MoL&E and Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, MYAS), and Union Minister Chandrakant Raghunath (C.R.) Patil (Ministry of Jal Shakti, MoJS).

Key Points:-

- (i) Harsh Rameshkumar Sanghvi, Gujarat's Home Minister, was recently elevated as Deputy Chief Minister (Dy-CM), becoming the 5th Dy-CM in the state's political history. Rivaba Jadeja, MLA from Jamnagar and wife of cricketer Ravindra Jadeja, was also inducted into the cabinet.
- (ii) Other significant members of the expanded Gujarat cabinet include Kantilal Ghiya, Keshubhai Patel, Narhari Amin, and Nitin Patel. The cabinet now comprises 21 members at various levels: 5 Cabinet-level, 3 Ministers of State (MoS) with Independent Charge (IC), and 12 MoS.
- (iii) Gujarat's 182-member Legislative Assembly permits a maximum of 27 ministers, equivalent to 15% of the House's total strength, ensuring the expanded cabinet remains within constitutional limits.

2. ACC Approves 3-Month Extension for A. Robert J. Ravi as CMD of BSNL and MTNL.



In October 2025, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) recently approved a three-month extension for A. Robert J. Ravi as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL).

- The extension is effective from October 15, 2025, to January 14, 2026, or until a regular appointment is made.
- Robert J. Ravi is a senior Indian Telecom Service (ITS) officer with over 30 years of experience in the telecommunications sector, having served in key roles in policy, standards, research, and innovation.
- He began his career in the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communication, and later served as Deputy Director General (DG) for Standards, Research & Innovation at DoT, contributing significantly to India's telecom development.

Key Points:-

- (i) In July 2024, Ravi was given additional charge as CMD of BSNL and MTNL after the extension of his predecessor, PK Purwar, was rejected. His tenure was extended by six months in January 2025, followed by another three-month extension from July 15,

2025, to October 14, 2025.

(ii) The recently approved extension is for three months from October 15, 2025, to January 14, 2026, or until a regular appointment is made, whichever is earlier. He will not receive any additional remuneration during this period of additional charges.

AWARDS

1. Abusupyan Kharkharov Honoured with BRICS International Award 2025 in Moscow.



In October 2025, Abusupyan Kharkharov, former Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Dagestan, was recently awarded the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) International Award 2025 for his contributions to spiritual education, cultural development, and maritime innovation.

- The award ceremony was held at the State Duma of the Russian Federation in Moscow, Russia.
- The award ceremony was organised by The Times of Russia Group in collaboration with the BRICS Culture Media Forum (BCMF), marking a significant platform for recognising global achievements in culture, education, and innovation.

- The event also marked the recent relaunch of The Times of Russia, emphasising journalism's renewed role in promoting truth, culture, and global dialogue.

Key Points:-

- (i) A round table was conducted on "Global Initiatives of the BRICS+ Countries in Economy, New Technologies, Culture, and Education," organised by BCMF in partnership with the Universal Peace Federation (UPF), fostering international collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- (ii) Alongside Kharkharov, Arseny Kaptelov and Vasily Zovdun were recognised for promoting clean water, youth empowerment, humanitarian ties, and poverty reduction.
- (iii) The session also highlighted key initiatives such as the 'Millennium Peace Prize' and the 'Ambassadors for Peace Initiative' to support humanitarian and sustainable development contributions.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. UN Observes International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2025.



The United Nations (UN) recently observed the International Day for the Eradication of

Poverty (IDEP) on October 17, 2025, aimed at promoting understanding and dialogue between people living in poverty and the wider society. The day highlights efforts to combat poverty as a violation of human rights.

- The theme for IDEP 2025 is “Ending social and institutional maltreatment by ensuring respect and effective support for families,” emphasising the protection and empowerment of vulnerable communities.

- The day traces its origins to October 17, 1987, when a mass gathering at Trocadéro Plaza, Paris, honoured victims of hunger, violence, and ignorance. The event declared poverty a human rights violation, inspiring annual observance.

Key Points:-

(i) On December 22, 1992, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/47/196, officially designating October 17 as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. The first UN-recognised IDEP was observed globally on October 17, 1993.

(ii) The 2025 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) report, for the first time, combines data on climate hazards and multidimensional poverty, providing a comprehensive understanding of poverty's complex nature.

(iii) Around 690 million people globally live in extreme income poverty, surviving on less than USD 2.15 per day, while nearly 1.1 billion people face acute multidimensional poverty, experiencing deprivations in health, education, and living standards.



World Trauma Day is recently observed annually on October 17 to raise awareness about physical and emotional trauma, highlighting the importance of timely medical care and preventive measures. The 2025 edition marks the 15th observance of this global awareness day.

- The theme for World Trauma Day 2025 is “Building a Safer Future with Trauma Care,” emphasising timely action, awareness, and effective medical care to save lives and prevent long-term complications from trauma.

- First observed in 2011 in New Delhi, India, World Trauma Day was established to reduce casualties and minimize the long-term impact of trauma incidents worldwide, promoting better trauma care systems globally.

Key Points:-

(i) World Trauma Day is part of the Bone & Joint Action Week, observed from October 12–20, 2025. The week includes five key observances: World Arthritis Day (12th), World Spine Day (16th), World Trauma Day (17th), World Pediatric Bone & Joint Day (19th), and World Osteoporosis Day (20th).

(ii) According to the World Health Organization (WHO), injuries cause over 5 million deaths each year globally, accounting

2. World Trauma Day 2025 Observed Globally on 17th October.

for 9% of all deaths. Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death among 15–29-year-olds worldwide and are projected to rise from the 8th to the 7th leading cause of death by 2030.

(iii) In India, injuries are projected to cause 10 lakh deaths annually, with an additional 2 crore people requiring hospitalization. The day highlights the need for strengthened trauma care systems and awareness to reduce preventable deaths.

DEFENCE

1. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Unveils LCA Tejas Mk1A and Third Production Line at HAL Nashik.



On October 17, 2025, Union Minister Rajnath Singh, Ministry of Defence (MoD), recently unveiled the first Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas Mk1A fighter jet and the third production line of LCA Mk1A at Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Nashik, Maharashtra. The event marked a key milestone in India's indigenous LCA programme.

- The newly manufactured LCA Tejas Mk1A, produced at the third production line, recently completed its maiden flight, demonstrating the

operational readiness and performance capabilities of the new production line.

- HAL inaugurated the third production line of LCA Tejas Mk1A at its Nashik facility. The line aims to meet the Indian Air Force (IAF)'s requirement of 180 Tejas Mk1A jets by 2032-33. Each production line is expected to manufacture 8 aircraft annually, increasing HAL's total output to 24 jets per year.

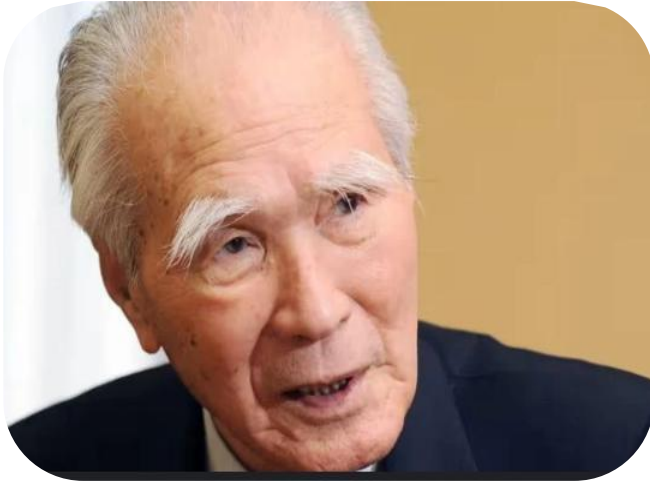
Key Points:-

(i) Alongside the LCA Tejas Mk1A, HAL inaugurated the second production line of the Hindustan Turbo Trainer (HTT)-40 aircraft. This line will enhance the manufacturing capacity of HTT-40 trainer aircraft, supporting the IAF's requirements for advanced pilot training.

(ii) The addition of the third Tejas Mk1A production line and the second HTT-40 line represents a major step in strengthening India's defence manufacturing capabilities, reducing dependency on imports, and ensuring timely delivery of modern fighter and trainer aircraft to the IAF.

OBITUARY

1. Former Japanese PM Tomiichi Murayama, Known for the 1995 "Murayama Statement," Dies at 101.



Key Points:-

(i) On August 15, 1995, marking the 50th anniversary of Japan's surrender in World War II, Murayama issued an official apology expressing Japan's remorse for its wartime aggression and colonial rule.

(ii) The statement remains a cornerstone of Japan's postwar diplomacy. After retiring from politics in 2000, he continued to advocate for peace and the preservation of Japan's pacifist Constitution, particularly Article 9.

On October 17, 2025, Japan's former Prime Minister (PM) Tomiichi Murayama, renowned for his historic 1995 World War II apology known as the "Murayama Statement," passed away at the age of 101 in Ōita, Japan. He served as Japan's 81st PM from 1994 to 1996, becoming the first socialist leader in nearly five decades.

- Tomiichi Murayama was born in Ōita Prefecture, Japan, in 1924. He began his political journey in local governance, serving on the Ōita City Council in 1955 and later in the Ōita Prefectural Assembly in 1963, building a foundation in regional politics before entering national service.

- Murayama was first elected to Japan's national parliament (Diet) in 1972 as a member of the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), which was later renamed the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ). His leadership and commitment to socialist values helped him rise to prominence within the party.

- As Japan's 81st Prime Minister, Murayama led a coalition government from 1994 to 1996, marking the return of socialist leadership after nearly 50 years. His tenure was notable for efforts toward political stability and fostering reconciliation with neighboring Asian nations.

Static GK

Indian Air Force(IAF)	Chief of Air Staff (CoAS) : Amar Preet Singh	Headquarters: New Delhi
Gujarat	Capital : Gandhinagar	Chief Minister : Bhupendrabhai Patel
Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)	Chairman and Managing Director : Dr. D.K. Sunil Kumar	Headquarters : Bengaluru, Karnataka
Mercer	Chief Executive Officer: Pat Tomlinson	Headquarters : New York, the United States of America (USA)