Shankar School of Banking | ASPIRANT'S CHOICE
Information is a Blessing
A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 17-09-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

Tirumala Hills and Erra Matti Dibbalu Enter UNESCO Tentative List

Andhra Pradesh's Tirumala Hills and Erra Matti Dibbalu (Red Sand Dunes) near Visakhapatnam have been added to the UNESCO Tentative List of World Heritage Sites.

This marks the first formal step toward full World Heritage recognition, highlighting their geological, ecological, and scientific significance.

Tirumala Hills: Home to the Eparchaean Unconformity, a visible geological boundary where rocks over 1.6 billion years old meet younger sedimentary layers; considered one of the world's oldest unconformities.

Erra Matti Dibbalu: Spanning 1,500 acres, these red sand dunes were first documented in 1886 by geologist William King. It is declared a National Geo-heritage Monument (2016) by GSI.

Unique Features include distinct red colour from natural iron oxidation; provides evidence of late Quaternary sea-level changes and past climatic fluctuations.

It faces risks from unregulated tourism, filming activities, and weak conservation enforcement.

Inclusion in the UNESCO list boosts international recognition, research potential, and eco-tourism prospects, while strengthening the conservation mandate.

National Agricultural Conference-Rabi Abhiyan 2025 Begins in New Delhi

The National Agricultural Conference – Rabi Abhiyan 2025 began on 15 September 2025 in New Delhi, chaired by Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

The two-day event (15–16 September 2025) is part of Phase 2 of the Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan, aimed at modernising Indian agriculture through technology, policy reforms, and farmer-centric strategies.

Participants included agricultural scientists, researchers, policymakers, state agriculture department officials, extension workers, and farmer representatives.

The conference focuses on formulating region-specific action plans for major Rabi crops like wheat, barley, mustard, chickpeas, and lentils.

Core objectives include: Promoting climate-resilient and water-efficient practices, Driving input efficiency in fertilizers, irrigation, and seeds, Strengthening farmer advisory systems and digital outreach and Ensuring alignment with national food security goals.

The programme highlights sustainable resource management, higher yields, and farmer income enhancement, supporting the vision of a Viksit Bharat (Developed India).

Under Phase 2 of Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan, the focus areas are: Enhancing state and district-level agronomic planning and Scaling up agricultural best practices.

This phase consolidates the gains of the Kharif season, while preparing for climate variability and market-linked farming during Rabi 2025–26.

India to Host 89th International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) General Meeting

India will host the 89th International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) General Meeting from 15 to 19 September 2025 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, organised by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

The event will bring together 2,000 global experts from 100 countries to deliberate on electrotechnical standards for a sustainable, all-electric, and connected future.

This is the fourth time India is hosting the IEC General Meeting, after 1960, 1997, and 2013.

The meeting will be inaugurated by Shri Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister of Consumer Affairs and New & Renewable Energy, while Shri Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, will open the IEC General Meeting Exhibition.

The exhibition (16–19 September) will feature 75 exhibitors showcasing smart lighting, electric mobility, electronics, and IT manufacturing, with free public entry through prior registration.

India has been designated the Global Secretariat for Standardisation in Low Voltage Direct Current (LVDC), a key area for clean energy and pollution-free solutions.

Through the IEC Young Professionals Programme, 93 participants from across the world will join boot camps, workshops, and industry visits.

BIS will integrate standardisation into education via student chapters and internships, and will promote sustainability with a Digital Sustainability Pledge initiative, under which one sapling will be planted for each pledge.

Hosting this event enhances India’s leadership in global standards, aligning with Make in India, Digital India, and Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla Inaugurates National Conference on Women Empowerment in Tirupati

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla inaugurated the National Conference on the Empowerment of Women in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.

The two-day event was organised by the Parliamentary and Legislative Committee on Empowerment of Women.

Om Birla emphasised that inclusive development requires active participation of women in every sphere of national life.

He highlighted the recent enactment of a law mandating 33% reservation for women in Parliament and State Assemblies, addressing their historic underrepresentation.

The conference featured the inauguration of an exhibition showcasing women's contributions and the release of a souvenir to mark the occasion.

Discussions focused on women's representation in legislatures, gender-sensitive policymaking, best practices from states and abroad, challenges faced by women legislators, and institutional support measures.

Sessions included expert panels, testimonies from women leaders, and deliberations on legal and policy tools to advance gender equality.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Third Edition of Unmesha International Literature Festival

Unmesha is Asia's largest and most inclusive International Literature Festival.

The third edition is scheduled to be held from September 25–28, 2025, at the Samrat Ashok Convention Centre in Patna, Bihar.

It is organized by the Sahitya Akademi in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, and the Government of Bihar.

The festival will feature more than 550 eminent writers, poets, scholars, translators, publishers, and distinguished personalities.

Participants will represent over 100 languages and 15 countries.

The event is planned to have 90 sessions over 4 days.

The previous editions were held in Shimla (2022) and Bhopal (2023).

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited to Manufacture Small

Satellite Launch Vehicle

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe), NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) signed the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV) Technology Transfer Agreement in Bengaluru.

Under the contract, HAL will absorb the SSLV technology in the first 2 years, followed by a 10-year production phase.

The SSLV is a three-stage launch vehicle designed to place satellites under 500 kg into Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

It can be launched from Sriharikota (inclined orbits) and the upcoming Kulasekarapattinam launch site (polar orbits).

The agreement grants HAL a non-exclusive, non-transferable license covering design, manufacturing, quality control, integration, launch operations, post-flight analysis, along with training and support.

BANKING

NABARD to Build Centralised Digital Lending Platform

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is developing a centralised digital lending platform for Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) to strengthen their competitiveness against non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and microfinance institutions (MFIs).

The initiative follows the One State-One RRB Policy, effective from 1 May 2025, which consolidated 43 RRBs into 28 banks.

The Centralised Digital Credit Infrastructure (CDCI) will digitise, automate, and streamline credit processing for various loan products.

RRBs were established in 1975 under an Ordinance (26 Sept 1975) and later formalised by the RRBs Act, 1976, to support the rural economy and supplement the Cooperative Credit Structure.

The shareholding pattern of RRBs is as follows: Government of India – 50%, State Government – 15%, and Sponsor Bank (PSB) – 35%.

Currently, 28 RRBs operate through 22,158 branches across 26 States and 3 Union Territories (Puducherry, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh).

ICICI Bank Extends Amazon Pay Co-Branded Credit Card Partnership for 7 More Years

ICICI Bank has renewed its partnership with Amazon Pay for the co-branded “Amazon Pay ICICI Credit Card” for another seven years.

The Amazon Pay ICICI Credit Card has over 5 million users, making it the largest co-branded credit card offering in India.

The partnership between ICICI Bank and Amazon Pay for this card was first launched in 2018.

As of July 2025, ICICI Bank has over 18 million credit cards in force, according to RBI data.

ICICI Bank is the third-largest credit card issuer in India after HDFC Bank and State Bank of India (SBI).

Axis Bank, the fourth-largest issuer, has a co-branded credit card partnership with Flipkart.

DEFENCE

INS Trikand, Indian Navy Stealth Frigate, Arrives at Salamis Bay, Greece During Mediterranean Deployment

INS Trikand, a stealth frigate of the Indian Navy, called at Salamis Bay, Greece on 13 September 2025 during its deployment to the Mediterranean Sea.

The visit includes the maiden bilateral maritime exercise between India and Greece, aimed at enhancing interoperability, refining tactical skills, and strengthening operational synergy.

During the port call, activities include interactions with senior military officials, planning discussions, cross deck visits, and cultural exchanges to boost bilateral and multilateral cooperation and people-to-people connect.

The visit will be followed by the sea phase of the exercise.

After completion of the bilateral exercise, INS Trikand will proceed to the next phase of deployment in the region.

Indian Navy Launches Third Diving Support Craft ‘DSC A 22’ in Kolkata

The Indian Navy launched ‘DSC A 22’, the third ship of the 05 x Diving Support Craft (DSC) project, on 12 September 2025 at Titagarh, Kolkata (West Bengal).

The DSC project is being built by M/s Titagarh Rail Systems Ltd (TRSL), Kolkata for the Indian Navy.

The contract for building 05 x DSCs was signed between the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and TRSL on 12 February 2021.

These DSC ships are designed to undertake diving operations in coastal waters and are fitted with state-of-the-art diving equipment.

The ships are catamaran hull vessels with a displacement of approximately 380 tons.

They are indigenously designed and built under the Naval Rules and Regulations of Indian Register of Shipping (IRS).

Hydrodynamic analysis/model testing was carried out at the Naval Science and Technological Laboratory (NSTL), Visakhapatnam during the design stage.

The DSC ships are flag bearers of the Make in India initiative of the Government of India (GoI)/Ministry of Defence (MoD).

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Ozone Day

Every year World Ozone Day is observed on 16 September.

In 1913, the French Physicists, Charles Fabry and Henri Buisson discovered the Ozone Layer.

The theme for World Ozone Day 2025 is "From science to global action".

In 1985, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer was adopted and signed by 28 countries.

On 16th September 1987 the Montreal Protocol, on the substance that depletes the ozone layer was signed by the United Nations and Other Nations.

The Montreal Protocol was first implemented on 1 January 1989.

The purpose of the Montreal Protocol is to reduce the production of a substance that causes the depletion of the ozone layer.

In 1994, the United Nations General Assembly decided to organize World Ozone Day on the 16th of September.