

CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 09-08-2023

TRIBES INDIA PAVILION AT CRAFTS BAZAAR AT BHARAT MANDAPAM SHOWCASES WIDE RANGE OF TRIBAL ART AND ARTIFACTS FOR THE G20 LEADERS' SUMMIT

PITHORA ART REVERED BY TRIBES OF GUJARAT AND MADHYA PRADESH TO BE ON LIVE DEMONSTRATION

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED), Ministry of Tribal Affairs is showcasing a wide range of traditional tribal art, artifacts, paintings, pottery, textiles, organic natural products and many more at the 'Tribes India' pavilion. The exhibition is being hosted at the Crafts Bazaar (Hall 3), as part of the G-20 Leaders' Summit at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi on 9th and 10th September 2023.



G20 | **India** | **2023**

Live Demonstration

Pithora Art: These ritual paintings, characterized by animated figures and lavish use of color, propagated by the Rathwa, Bhilala, Naik and Bhil tribes of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, go beyond the realm of decorative art and are a labour of love, associated with great sanctity. The painting here, is a medium of propitiation, thanksgiving and commemoration of auspicious occasions.

Paresh Rathwa, a name that resonates as a pioneer in Pithora Art, having practised it for almost three decades. The paintings are made in a rectangular enclosure with a decorative triangular border. Over the years, Paresh has further developed his skill and modified Pithora art with some new and interesting designs like a monotone tree of life bustling with fauna all living together harmoniously. His mural art portfolio showcases his magnificent creativity on walls in various offices and houses, where he has brought to life traditional art with a modern twist. He is a forerunner artist for wall art in Tribes India Interior Design Studio. Shri Pareshbhai Jayantibhai Rathwa has been bestowed with the Padma Shri Award by Government of India for the year 20233-23 for his exceptional contribution in Pithora Art.

Pareshbhai Jayantibhai Rathwa
Craft: Pithora Art
Tribe: Rathwa
District: Chota Udaipur
State: Gujarat

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Padma Shri awardee Shri Paresh Rathwa, a renowned artist of Pithora art, would be present and giving live demonstration of the richness and ritualist art revered by Rathwa, Bhilala, Naik and Bhil tribes of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. This passionate approach to the age old art has not only revived our cultural richness but also has generated curiosity world over.

Gond painting from Madhya Pradesh and Saura painting by artisans from Odisha is captivating to the eye. Besides the Angora and Pashmina shawls from the high altitudes of Leh-Ladakh and Himachal Pradesh, woven by the Bodh and Bhutia tribes are 'not to be missed'. The colorful jewelery by the Konyak tribals of Nagaland appeases the eye.

The richness of the Maheshwari silk sarees from Madhya Pradesh is worn during religious functions and auspicious events. Add it to Eri or "Millenium Silk", so delicately made by Bodo tribe from Assam which gives richness a new dimension altogether.

Dhokra jewelery, carved out of molten metals, beads, colorful glass pieces, wooden balls gives it the ethnicity, exoticness and richness. This traditional jewelery is natural themed and ethically sophisticated. Tribal artisans from West Bengal, Odisha, Chhatisgarh and Madhya Pradesh are the architects of these pieces of intrinsic art.

Grace and beauty are so delicately carved out of Meena tribal artisans of Rajasthan in the Metal Ambabari craft. These products are crafted using enameling which is the art of colorings or decorating a metal surface by attaching delicate designs of flowers, birds, etc. on the surface. This gives a unique traditional grace and serenity to the households where such crafts are displayed.

Natural products such as Araku Valley coffee, honey, cashews, rice, spices from various states of India including Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Chhatisgarh and Maharashtra on display are a few among the many products promoted by TRIFED.

TRIFED

TRIFED was established in August 1987 under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984 by the Government of India as a National level Cooperative body under the administrative control of the then Ministry of Welfare of India, with the basic mandate of bringing about socio-economic development of tribals of the country by institutionalizing the trade of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) & Surplus Agricultural Produce (SAP) collected/cultivated by them.

As a market developer and service provider, the objective of TRIFED is socio-economic development of tribal people in the country by way of marketing development of the tribal products on which the lives of tribals depends heavily as they spend most of their time and derive a major portion of their income. The philosophy behind this approach is to empower tribal people with knowledge, tools and pool of information so that they can undertake their operations in a more systematic and scientific manner.

G20 document prepared by World Bank lauds India's progress

Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) has had a transformative impact on India, extending far beyond inclusive finance. The G20 Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion document (https://www.g20.org/content/dam/gtwenty/gtwenty_new/document/G20_POLICY_RECOMMENDATIONS.pdf) prepared by World Bank has lauded transformative impact of DPIs in India over the past decade under the Central Government.



The document highlights the groundbreaking measures taken by Central Government and the pivotal role of government policy and regulation in shaping the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) landscape.

Financial Inclusion: Lauding India's DPI approach the World Bank document notes that India has achieved in just 6 years what would have taken about five decades.

JAM Trinity has propelled financial inclusion rate from 25% in 2008 to over 80% of adults in last 6 years, a journey shortened by up to 47 years thanks to DPIs.

The document categorically notes, "While DPIs' role in this leapfrogging is undoubtable, other ecosystem variables and policies that build on the availability of DPIs were critical. These included interventions to create a more enabling legal and regulatory framework, national policies to expand account ownership, and leveraging Aadhaar for identity verification."

Since its launch, the number of PMJDY accounts opened tripled from 147.2 million in March 2015 to 462 million by June 2022; women own 56 percent of these accounts, more than 260 million.

The Jan Dhan Plus programme encourages low-income women to save, resulting in over 12 million women customers (as of April 2023) and a 50% increase in average balances in just five months, as against the entire portfolio in the same time period. It is estimated that by engaging 100 million low-income women in savings activities, public sector banks in India can attract approximately Rs 25,000 crore (\$3.1 billion) in deposits.



Government to Person (G2P) Payments:

In the last decade, India has built one of the world's largest digital G2P architectures leveraging DPI.

This approach has supported transfers amounting to about \$361 billion directly to beneficiaries from 53 Central government ministries through 312 key schemes.

As of March 2022, this had resulted in a total savings of \$33 billion, equivalent to nearly 1.14 percent of GDP.

UPI:

More than 9.41 billion transactions valuing about Rs 14.89 trillion were transacted in May 2023 alone.

For the fiscal year 2022–23, the total value of UPI transaction was nearly 50 percent of India's nominal GDP.

DPIs' Potential Added Value for the Private Sector:

The DPI in India has also enhanced efficiency for private organizations through reductions in the complexity, the cost and the time taken for business operations in India.

Even some NBFCs have been enabled 8% higher conversion rate in SME lending, a 65% savings in depreciation costs and 66% reduction in costs related to fraud detection.

According to industry estimates, banks' costs of onboarding customers in India decreased from \$23 to \$0.1 with the use of DPI.

Lower Cost of Compliance for Banks for KYC

India Stack has digitised and simplified KYC procedures, lowering costs; banks that use e-KYC lowered their cost of compliance from \$0.12 to \$0.06. The decrease in costs made lower-income clients more attractive to service and generated profits to develop new products.

Cross-Border Payments:

The UPI-PayNow interlinking between India and Singapore, operationalised in February 2023, aligns with G20's financial inclusion priorities and facilitates faster, cheaper, and more transparent cross-border payments.

Account Aggregator (AA) Framework:

India's Account Aggregator (AA) Framework aims to strengthen India's data infrastructure, enabling consumers and enterprises to share their data only with their consent through an electronic consent framework. The framework is regulated by RBI.

Total of 1.13 billion cumulative accounts are enabled for data sharing, with 13.46 million cumulative number of consents raised in June 2023.

Data Empowerment and Protection Architecture (DEPA):

India's DEPA grants individuals' control over their data, enabling them to share it across providers. This promotes tailored product and service access without requiring new entrants to invest heavily in pre-existing client relationships, fostering innovation and competition.

21st EDITION INDIA FRANCE BILATERAL NAVAL EXERCISE 'VARUNA' – 2023

Phase II of the 21st edition of Varuna (Varuna-23) bilateral exercise between Indian and French Navy was conducted in the Arabian Sea. The exercise witnessed participation of guided missile frigates, tanker, Maritime Patrol Aircraft and integral helicopters from the two sides. The exercise was conducted over three days and witnessed joint operations, underway replenishment and various tactical manoeuvres. Units of both navies endeavoured to enhance and hone their war fighting skills, improve interoperability and demonstrate their ability to promote, peace, security and stability in the region. The first phase of 'Varuna-2023' was conducted off India's Western Seaboard from 16 to 20 Jan 23



Indian & French Navy bilateral naval exercise was initiated in 1993. The exercise was later christened as 'Varuna' in 2001 and has since become a hallmark of robust India-France strategic bilateral relationship. Having grown in scope and complexity over the years, this exercise provides an opportunity to learn from each other's best practices and procedures. The exercise also facilitates operational level interaction between the two Navies to foster mutual cooperation for good order at sea, underscoring the shared commitment to ensuring security, safety and freedom of the global maritime commons.

New Delhi G20 Summit will chart a new path in the human-centric and inclusive development: PM

**India's G20 Presidency has been inclusive, ambitious, decisive, and action-oriented
Important to emulate Gandhi Ji's mission of serving the underprivileged, the very last person in the queue**

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has expressed confidence that the New Delhi G20 Summit will chart a new path in the human-centric and inclusive development. He emphasized that India's G20 Presidency has been inclusive, ambitious, decisive, and action-oriented where the developmental concerns of the Global South have been actively voiced.

Highlighting the importance of emulating Gandhi Ji's mission of serving the underprivileged, the Prime Minister underlined that India places great emphasis on a human-centric way of furthering progress.

The Prime Minister informed that he will be chairing Sessions on 'One Earth', 'One Family' and 'One Future', covering a range of issues of prime concern to the world community including furthering strong, sustainable, inclusive and balanced growth. He also mentioned

holding bilateral meetings with several leaders and Heads of Delegation to further deepen the bonds of friendship and cooperation.

The Prime Minister further added that Hon'ble President will host a dinner for the leaders on 9th September 2023. The leaders will pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat on the 10th of September 2023. At the Closing Ceremony, on the same day, G20 Leaders will share their collective vision for a sustainable and equitable 'One Future', together like 'One Family', for a healthier 'One Earth'.

Sharing a thread on X, the Prime Minister said:

“India is delighted to host the 18th G20 Summit on 09-10 September 2023 at New Delhi's iconic Bharat Mandapam. This is the first ever G20 Summit being hosted by India. I look forward to productive discussions with world leaders over the next two days.

It is my firm belief that the New Delhi G20 Summit will chart a new path in the human-centric and inclusive development.”

INCREMENTAL CRR



To deal with the excess liquidity in the banking system, which was partly caused by the inflow of Rs 2,000 notes, the RBI announced the Incremental Cash Reserve Ratio (I-CRR) on August 10, 2023. This was a temporary measure to mop up the extra cash and maintain the stability of the financial system.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced the I-CRR (Incremental Cash Reserve Ratio) on August 10, 2023, as a temporary measure to absorb excess liquidity from the banking system. This decision was made to address the surplus liquidity generated by various factors, including the return of Rs 2,000 notes to the banking system, RBI's surplus transfer to the government, increased government spending, and capital inflows. The excessive liquidity in the system was seen as a potential risk to price stability and financial stability.

After reviewing the liquidity conditions, the RBI has decided to discontinue the I-CRR in a phased manner. The aim is to release the impounded funds gradually to avoid sudden shocks to the system and ensure that money markets function smoothly.

The RBI has outlined a schedule for releasing the funds maintained by lenders under the I-CRR:

- 25% of the funds will be released on September 9.
- Another 25% will be released on September 23.

- The remaining 50% will be released on October 7.

The phased release of funds is intended to provide banks with sufficient liquidity to meet higher credit demand during the upcoming festival season.

SHINGLES



The rapid spread of viruses during the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the need for genomic surveillance to track variants. Scientists from the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Virology have detected the Clade 9 variant of varicella zoster virus (VZV) for the first time in India.

The Clade 9 variant of the varicella-zoster virus (VZV) has been identified in India for the first time. This virus is responsible for causing chickenpox and herpes zoster (shingles).

Despite the presence of the Clade 9 variant, there were no significant indications of increased disease severity in the patients. However, in rare cases, VZV infections can lead to severe complications, including central nervous system involvement.

Shingles, also known as herpes zoster, is a viral infection caused by the varicella-zoster virus (VZV). This is the same virus responsible for chickenpox.

Symptoms (Signs of Shingles)

Painful Rash: The hallmark symptom of shingles is a painful rash. This rash is characterized by red patches that evolve into fluid-filled blisters. It typically appears on one side of the body or face and follows the path of a nerve. The pain can range from mild to severe and is often described as burning, stabbing, or shooting.

Itching and Tingling: Before the rash becomes visible, many individuals experience itching, burning, or tingling sensations in the area where the rash will eventually appear. These sensations can be uncomfortable and are often an early warning sign of shingles.

Flu-Like Symptoms: In addition to the rash and localized pain, some people with shingles may experience flu-like symptoms. These can include fever, headache, and fatigue. These symptoms are not as prominent as the rash and pain but can contribute to overall discomfort.

Blisters: The rash progresses from red patches to small, fluid-filled blisters. These blisters are fragile and can break open, oozing fluid. Over time, the blisters crust over and begin to heal. The entire process can take several weeks.

Schizostachyum andamanicum

Recently, the patent office of Government of India has granted a patent to Botanical Survey of India for bamboo (*Schizostachyum andamanicum*) based reusable straw.

It is only found in some forested areas of Andamans.

It grows primarily in the wet tropical biome.

This species of bamboo is characterized by a thin large hollow erect culm (stem) with long internodes and has the potential to develop into a straw.

It has small, white flowers that are arranged in clusters. The seeds are small and black, and the seedlings have thin, light green leaves.

Key Facts about Botanical Survey of India

It is the apex taxonomic research organization of India.

It works under the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India.

It was established in 1890 under the direction of Sir George King. The mandate of the organization has been broadened to biosystematics research, floristic studies, documentation, databasing of the National Botanical collection, digitization of herbarium specimens etc.

Headquarters: Kolkata

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the US President Joe Biden held a bilateral meeting on the eve of the G20 meeting.



The US president also reaffirmed his support for a reformed UN Security Council with India as a permanent member during the talks.



Joint statement released

The joint statement hailed ties spanning seas to stars. Their 29-paragraph joint statement focused exclusively on the bilateral agenda.

It made no mention of regional and global issues, counter-terrorism or situation in the neighbourhood including Afghanistan, Pakistan and Myanmar.

Critical defence pacts and the procurement

the recent pact between GE Aerospace and Hindustan Aeronautical Limited (HAL) to manufacture GE F-414 jet engines in India and the procurement of 31 General Atomics MQ-9B remotely piloted aircraft. The F414 engines will power the IAF's Light Combat Aircraft Mk2 jets.

Only a handful of countries such as the US, Russia, the UK, and France have been able to master these specialised technologies needed to manufacture an engine that can power a combat aircraft.

The procurements of remotely piloted aircraft will enhance the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities of India's armed forces.

These critical defence pacts and the procurement was announced during PM Modi's State visit to the US in June this year. However, the meeting will likely expedite their progress.

Both the leaders applauded the conclusion of a second Master Ship Repair Agreement.

The most recent agreement was signed by the U.S. Navy and Mazgaon Dock Shipbuilders, Ltd., in August 2023. This will advance India's emergence as a hub for the maintenance and repair of forward-deployed U.S. Navy assets. Commitment to deepen and diversify the India-U.S. Major Defence Partnership

Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to deepen and diversify the India-U.S. Major Defence Partnership through expanded cooperation in new and emerging domains such as space and AI, and accelerated defence industrial collaboration.

India-U.S. Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X)

Both the leaders commended the INDUS-X team for establishing a robust collaboration agenda to harness the innovative work of the U.S. and Indian defence sectors to address shared security challenges.

The initiative aims to explore possibilities for co-producing jet engines, long-range artillery, and infantry vehicles.

INDUS-X had convened the inaugural Academia Start-up Partnership at IIT Kanpur.

It initiated the Joint Accelerator Program for Indian Startups in August 2023 at Hyderabad.

On Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET)

iCET is a framework for India and the United States to collaborate on critical and emerging technologies.



The initiative was launched in January 2023 to strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries.

Both sides decided on a midterm review of iCET in September 2023 and to work towards an annual review, co-led by the National Security Advisors of both countries, in early 2024.

Space cooperation

Space cooperation had formed a very important part of the joint statement during PM Modi's state visit to the US in June this year.

At that time, the two countries had announced that:

India would join the US-led Artemis Accords for planetary exploration, and that the space agencies of the two countries, ISRO and NASA, would mount a joint mission to the International Space Station in 2024.

This time, the leaders welcomed efforts towards establishment of a Working Group for commercial space collaboration under the existing India-US Civil Space Joint Working Group.

The two countries also announced their intention to work together on planetary defence to protect planet Earth and space assets from the impact of asteroids and near-Earth objects.

This also includes US support for India's participation in asteroid detection and tracking via the Minor Planet Center.

India-US Cancer Dialogue

India-US Cancer Dialogue will be launched in November 2023 and the US-India health dialogue in October 2023 in Washington DC.

On the nuclear side

Both sides welcomed intensified consultations to expand opportunities for facilitating India-US collaboration in nuclear energy, including in development of next generation small modular reactor technologies.

The US also reaffirmed its support for India's membership in Nuclear Suppliers Group and said it would continue to talk to others to achieve this goal.

Multi-billion-dollar investment platform

In June, both sides had envisaged a multi-billion-dollar investment platform to provide catalytic capital for greenfield renewable energy projects. This time, they put their money on it as each side agreed to provide up to \$500 million towards an investment fund.

On Innovation Handshake

The Innovation Handshake is a new initiative between India and US. It was announced in June 2023 during PM Modi's visit to US. It is aimed at addressing regulatory hurdles that stand in the way of cooperation between the two countries and promoting job growth in emerging technologies.

This time, the two leaders decided to include two anchor events (one in India and one in the United States).



Under this, the two sides will collaborate to bring together start-ups, private equity and venture capital firms to build linkages between the two countries' innovation ecosystems.

On trade disputes

Both leaders lauded the settlement of the seventh and last outstanding India-US World Trade Organisation (WTO) dispute.

This was beyond the settlement of six outstanding bilateral trade disputes in the WTO in June 2023.

Setting up of a Global Challenges Institute

Both leaders welcomed the increasing academic partnerships between Indian and American higher education institution.

This includes setting up of a Global Challenges Institute to strengthen research on sustainable energy, agriculture, health and pandemic preparedness.

On building resilient global semiconductor supply chains

Both the leaders reiterated their stance on building resilient global semiconductor supply chains and in a signal that highlights the two countries' growing distance from China, India also supported the US's 'Rip and Replace' pilot project. This project mandates that American companies tear out telecom equipment made by the Chinese companies (Huawei and ZTE). This move has already been implemented by New Delhi as part of its 5G launch.

Modi and Biden expressed satisfaction over the current status of the investment announcements that were made by American chip companies.

Both leaders also acknowledged the setting-up of two Joint Task Forces focused on collaboration in the field of Open RAN (radio access network) and research and development in 5G/6G technologies.

Open RAN is an ongoing shift in mobile network architectures that enables service providers the use of non-proprietary subcomponents from a variety of vendors.

Both sides also welcomed the signing of an agreement between the Bharat 6G Alliance and Next G Alliance, as a first step towards deepening public-private cooperation between vendors and operators.

The Bharat 6G alliance, a public-private sector initiative, was formed after the PM said India would launch the next-generation high speed network by 2030.

The alliance aims to establish India as a supplier of IP, products and solutions of affordable 5G and 6G and other future telecom solutions.

It has all the three telcos – Jio, Airtel and Vi – as members along with companies like Tech Mahindra.