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## Current Affairs - 16 September 2024

### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DEMOCRACY



- It is an annual celebration observed on September 15.
- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) established this day in 2007 to emphasise the global significance of democracy.
- It serves as a reminder that democracy is not merely a fixed condition, but an ongoing pursuit.
- It calls for active engagement from international organizations, nation-states, civil society, and people to pursue the democratic idea.
- History:
  - The International Day of Democracy was accredited by the UNGA on November 8, 2007, by passing a resolution entitled “Support by United Nations system of efforts of governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies.”
  - September 15 was chosen to coincide with the anniversary of the Inter-Parliamentary Union’s Universal Declaration on Democracy, which was adopted in Geneva on September 15, 1997.
  - This declaration outlines the tenets of democracy, proclaiming that democracy is “a system of government based on the freely expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social, and cultural systems and their full participation, through free and fair periodic elections, in the composition of their representative government.”
  - After the Universal Declaration on Democracy, Qatar spearheaded the campaign to observe an International Day of Democracy at the United Nations.
  - The first-ever International Day of Democracy was held in 2008.

#### Key Facts about the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU):

- IPU is the international organization of Parliaments.
- It was established in 1889 in Paris to promote representative democracy and world peace.



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## Current Affairs - 16 September 2024

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- The IPU facilitates parliamentary diplomacy and empowers parliaments and parliamentarians to promote peace, democracy, and sustainable development around the world.
  - It was the first multilateral political organization in the world, encouraging cooperation and dialogue between all nations.
  - Slogan: “For democracy. For everyone”
  - Today, the IPU comprises 179 member parliaments and 13 associate members.
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### NIDHI COMPANIES



- A NIDHI Company is recognised under Section 406 of the Companies Act 2013 and typically operates in the Non-Banking Financing Sector of India.
  - It is formed to borrow and lend money to its members. It inculcates the habit of saving among its members and works on the principle of mutual benefit.
  - It is not required to receive the license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), as these are registered with the Companies Act.
  - Members: A minimum of seven members is required to start a Nidhi Company out of which three members must be the directors of the company.
  - Activities Prohibited in a Nidhi Company
  - It can't deal with chit funds, hire-purchase finance, leasing finance, insurance or securities business.
  - It is strictly prohibited from accepting deposits from or lending funds to, any other person except members.
  - Nidhi companies should not issue preference shares, debentures or any other debt instrument in any manner, name or form.
  - Nidhi companies should not open current accounts with their members.
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## Current Affairs - 16 September 2024

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### WHAT ARE EMMY AWARDS?



- The Emmy Awards are the most renowned accolades given to television and emerging media performances. Unlike Oscars and Golden Globe awards, they aren't given for films.
  - These were conceived in 1948 and the first ceremony took place on January 25, 1949.
  - Apart from the International Emmy Awards and the Primetime Emmy Awards, the Emmys are also given in the following categories: daytime, sports, news and documentary, technology and engineering and regional.
  - While Primetime Emmy Awards honour television shows produced only in America and aired during primetime, International Emmy Awards are for international shows.
  - Daytime Emmy Awards are given to American shows aired during late-morning and afternoon. Regional Emmy Awards are for regional television markets, including state-to-state programming, local news and locally produced shows.
  - These awards are given by three sister organizations:
  - First is the Television Academy, which administers the Primetime Emmy Awards.
  - Second is the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, which oversees daytime, sports, news and documentary categories.
  - Third is the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, which is responsible for International Emmys.
  - Each organisation maintains its own membership of television professionals who vote and decide who will get the award.
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### BHASKAR PLATFORM

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry is set to launch a groundbreaking digital platform BHASKAR.

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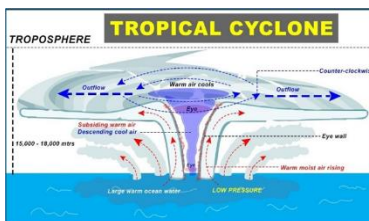
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## Current Affairs - 16 September 2024



The Bharat Startup Knowledge Access Registry (BHASKAR) initiative, under the Startup India program aimed at strengthening India's startup ecosystem.

- It is a platform designed to centralize, streamline and enhance collaboration among key stakeholders within the entrepreneurial ecosystem, including startups, investors, mentors, service providers and government bodies.
- The primary goal of BHASKAR is to build the world's largest digital registry for stakeholders within the startup ecosystem.
- Key Features of BHASKAR
- Networking and Collaboration: BHASKAR will bridge the gap between startups, investors, mentors, and other stakeholders, allowing for seamless interaction across sectors.
- Providing Centralized Access to Resources: By consolidating resources, the platform will provide startups with immediate access to critical tools and knowledge, enabling faster decision-making and more efficient scaling.
- Creating Personalized Identification: Every stakeholder will be assigned a unique BHASKAR ID, ensuring personalized interactions and tailored experiences across the platform.
- Enhancing Discoverability: Through powerful search features, users can easily locate relevant resources, collaborators, and opportunities, ensuring faster decision-making and action.



### TYPHOON YAGI - ASIA'S MOST POWERFUL STORM

Typhoon Yagi, the strongest tropical cyclone in Asia this year and second only to Hurricane Beryl globally, has caused widespread devastation across Southeast Asia.



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## Current Affairs - 16 September 2024

Countries like the Philippines, China, Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand have been severely affected, but Vietnam has borne the brunt of the storm, with around 233 deaths. Torrential rains, floods, and landslides have added to the challenges faced by millions in the affected areas.

### Tropical Cyclones

- Cyclones that develop in the regions between the Tropics of Capricorn and Cancer are called tropical cyclones.
- The World Meteorological Organisation uses the term 'Tropical Cyclone' to cover weather systems in which winds exceed 'Gale Force' (minimum of 34 knots or 63 kph).
- Tropical cyclones are the progeny of ocean and atmosphere, powered by the heat from the sea; and driven by easterly trades and temperate westerlies, high planetary winds and their own fierce energy.
- **Formation of cyclones**
  - Tropical Cyclone is a **weather phenomenon**, which is formed **only over warm ocean waters near the equator**.
- **Characteristics of a Tropical Cyclone:**
  - The **centre of a cyclone is very calm and clear with very low air pressure**. The average speed is **120 kmph**.
  - They have closed **isobars** which leads to greater velocity.
    - Isobars are imaginary lines on a weather map that connect locations with equal atmospheric pressure.
  - They develop over oceans and sea only.
  - They move from east to west under the influence of trade winds.
  - They are seasonal in nature.

### Classification of cyclones

- Cyclones are classified **on the basis of wind speed** by the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD):



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## Current Affairs - 16 September 2024

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- **Depression:** Wind speeds of between 31–49 km/h
- **Deep Depression:** Between 50-61 km/h
- **Cyclonic Storm:** Between 62–88 km/h
- **Severe Cyclonic Storm:** Between 89-117 Km/h
- **Very Severe Cyclonic Storm:** Between 118-166 Km/h
- **Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm:** Between 167-221 Km/h
- **Super Cyclonic Storm:** Above 222 Km/h

### Tropical cyclones are known by different names in various regions

- **Hurricanes** – In the in the West Indian islands in the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean.
- **Tornados** - In the Guinea lands of West Africa and southern USA
- **Typhoons** – In the Northwest Pacific Ocean, particularly affecting East and Southeast Asia (e.g., Japan, Philippines, China, Taiwan).
- **Cyclones** – In the Southwest Indian Ocean (off the coast of Africa, Madagascar), the Southeast Indian Ocean, and the Southwest Pacific Ocean.
- **Willy-Willies** – An informal term used for tropical cyclones in Australia.

### Operation Sadbhav by India

- India launched Operation Sadbhav to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) to Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam that have been hit by severe flooding caused by Typhoon Yagi.
  - India has committed \$1mn worth of flood relief assistance to Vietnam and \$1,00,000 worth of assistance to Laos.
  - India has been among the first responders in providing HADR to the region.
  - This Operation is part of India's broader effort to contribute to HADR within the ASEAN region, in line with its longstanding Act East Policy.
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## Current Affairs - 16 September 2024

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### ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN THIS TERM

- The concept of "One Nation, One Election" envisions a system in which all state and Lok Sabha elections must be held simultaneously.
- This will entail restructuring the Indian election cycle so that elections to the states and the centre coincide.
- This would imply that voters will vote for members of the LS and state assemblies on the same day and at the same time (or in a phased manner as the case may be).
- **Various Committees on Simultaneous election**
  - The idea of returning to simultaneous elections was raised in the Election Commission's annual report in 1983.
    - It was also mentioned in the Law Commission's Report in 1999.
  - Following the reintroduction of the idea by PM Modi in 2016, the NITI Aayog prepared a working paper on the subject in 2017.
  - The Law Commission stated in its 2018 working paper that at least "five Constitutional recommendations" would be required to make simultaneous elections a reality in India again.
  - In July 2022, the issue of holding simultaneous Parliamentary and Assembly elections was referred to the 22<sup>nd</sup> Law Commission.
    - It recommended various steps in order to conduct simultaneous elections in India.
    - It also suggested the addition of a new chapter (Part XVA) on simultaneous polls in the Constitution.

### **High-level Committee (HLC) on One Nation, One Election**

- The HLC, popularly known as the Kovind panel after its chairman, former President Ram Nath Kovind, was constituted in September 2023. It was constituted to study the issues involving One Nation, One Election. It submitted its report in March 2024.

## Current Affairs - 16 September 2024

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### Key recommendations of the HLC

- **Simultaneous election by 2029**
    - The panel recommended amending the Constitution so that elections for the Lok Sabha, all state assemblies and local bodies can be held by 2029.
  - **Amending the Constitution**
    - The Constitution should be amended to enable simultaneous elections in two steps.
      - In all, 18 amendments to the Constitution and other statutes have been suggested.
  - **Insertion of Article 324A**
    - The committee recommended an **Article 324A**, which states that Parliament may make a law to ensure that elections to municipalities and panchayats be held together with General Elections.
  - **Single electoral roll and election ID**
    - To make single electoral roll and electoral photo identity cards for use in elections to all the three tiers of government, the Constitution should be amended.
    - These amendments will require ratification by not less than one-half of the states.
  - **In case of hung house**
    - In the event of a hung House, a no-confidence motion, or any such event, fresh elections should be held to constitute the new Lok Sabha or state Assembly for the unexpired term of the House.
  - **Meeting logistics requirement**
    - The committee suggests that the Election Commission of India should plan ahead with State Election Commissions for things like manpower, polling staff, security forces, and voting machines to ensure fair elections across all levels of government at the same time.
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### PALAMAU TIGER RESERVE



- Location: It is located on the western part of the Chotanagpur plateau in Jharkhand.

- The reserve forms part of the Betla National Park.
- It is one of the first nine tiger reserves created in the country at the inception of 'Project Tiger'.
- It is the first reserve in the world in which a tiger census was carried out as a pugmark count as early as 1932 under the supervision of J.W. Nicholson.
- Three rivers, namely North Koyal, Auranga, and Burha, flow through the valleys.
- The geological formation consists of gneiss and includes granite and limestone.
- The reserve is very rich in minerals like Bauxite and Coal.

Vegetation:

- It is primarily dominated by the Northern Tropical Dry Deciduous, Sal Forest and its associates.
- Smaller patches of Northern tropical Moist Deciduous forests exist too in the Reserve.

Flora: Shorea robusta, Acacia catechu, Madhuca indica, Terminalia tomentosa, Butea monosperma, Pterocarpus marsupium, Anogeisus latifolia, Indigofera pulchella, etc.

Fauna: The keystone species are Tigers, Elephants, Leopards, Grey Wolf, Gaur, Sloth Bear, Four-horned Antelope, Indian Ratel, Indian Otter, and Indian Pangolin.

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