DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 04-01-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

Hydrogen Blended PNG Project

- India's largest power company NTPC Ltd has commissioned India's first green hydrogen blending project at Kawas, Gujarat.
- The piped natural gas (PNG) blended with green hydrogen gas is being supplied through the Gujarat Gas limited piped natural gas (PNG) network in the NTPC Kawas township, Surat.
- Green Hydrogen refers to the breaking down of the water molecule into hydrogen and oxygen using renewable sources of energy.
- The Central government owned NTPC provides the green hydrogen produced at its 1 megawatt (MW) floating solar project of NTPC Kawas in the Surat district of Gujarat for blending purposes.
- This is the first project of its kind in the country. This is seen as a first step toward the decarbonization of the cooking sector and self-sufficiency for the energy requirements of the nation.

International Year of Millets (IYM) 2023

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets (IYM), a proposal sponsored by the Government of India (GoI) to promote these 'Nutri-cereal'.
- The declaration will be helpful to the Government of India in articulating its goal of making IYM 2023 a 'People's Movement' as well as presenting India as the 'Global Hub for Millets,' as India produces one-fifth of the world's millets.
- Millets were among the first crops to be domesticated in India with several evidence of their consumption during the Indus valley civilization.

- India is the largest producer of millet in the world.
- Currently, India is the fifth largest exporter of millets in the world, according to 2020 data.

Samvidhan Udyan in Jaipur

- The President of India, Droupadi Murmu inaugurated Samvidhan Udyan, Mayur Stambh, National Flag Post, statues of Mahatma Gandhi and Maharana Pratap at Raj Bhavan, Jaipur on 03 January 2023.
- She virtually inaugurated the Transmission System for Solar Power Sectors in Rajasthan and laid the foundation stone of the 1000 MW Bikaner Solar Power Project of SJVN Limited.
- The President also announced that women are continuously moving forward from Panchayat to Parliament House on their own.

50 Electric Buses Launched in Delhi

- 50 electric buses were launched in Delhi with support from the government under the FAME India Phase II scheme of the Ministry of Heavy Industry.
- In 2019, the government approved Rs 10,000 crore for a period of three years.
- Union Heavy Industries Minister Mahendra Nath Pandey said that the government has placed an order for 3,538 electric buses. Of these, a total of 1,716 buses have been deployed.
- To improve the infrastructure required for the large-scale use of electric vehicles, the Government formulated a Scheme namely FAME India (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles) in 2015.
- The main objective of this scheme is to reduce pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Hydrogen Powered Train

- China became the first country in Asia and second in the world to launch Hydrogen powered urban trains.

- According to the Chinese officials, the operation of the train will reduce CO_2 emissions compared to diesel traction by 10 tons per year.
- Chinese company CRRC Corporations ltd built a train that has a top speed of 160 KM per hour and can run without refuelling for 600 Km.
- The hydrogen fuel cell uses hydrogen and air to generate electricity. The combination of air and hydrogen will produce water as a by-product which will be released by the Train.
- Germany was the first country to introduce hydrogen powered trains in September 2022.

Croatia Adopts Euro Currency

- Croatia adopted the euro currency and also joined Europe's free passport club (Schengen area).
- Croatia with a population of about 4 million said goodbye to its Kuna currency and became the 20th member of the Eurozone.
- It will be the 27th country in the world's largest passport-free Schengen zone, which enables more than 400 million people to move freely within its member states.
- It will also boost Croatia's major tourism industry, which accounts for 20 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP).
- The Eurozone consists of 19 members of the European Union (EU), which uses the Euro as their official currency.
- The border-free Schengen Area guarantees visa-free movement for over 400 million EU citizens, as well as tourists, students living in the EU and visiting the EU.

BANKING

ADB To Provide Loan for Infrastructure Projects

- The Manila based Asian Development Bank (ADB) has agreed to provide a $1.22 billion loan to the government of India for Infrastructure development in various states.

- An agreement was signed between the Indian Government and ADB in New Delhi on 03 January 2023.
- India is the largest borrower of ADB.
- The agreements would cover projects for improving the power sector and highways in the Northeastern states of Tripura and Assam, metro rail connectivity in the southern city of Chennai and improvement of key economic areas in the western state of Maharashtra.

Tripura Signs Rs 2,275 Crore Agreement with ADB

- Tripura government has signed an agreement for an Asian Development Bank (ADB)-assisted project of Rs 2,275 crore (US $275 million) for the Improvement of Tripura's Power Distribution Strengthening and Generation Efficiency.
- The project will be implemented in the next 3 years.
- The ADB project will support the state government's efforts to strengthen its power sector by replacing inefficient power plants and strengthening the distribution system.
- The project would have an Rs 1820 crore loan from ADB and Rs 455 crore of direct investment by the State government to improve energy security, quality of supply, efficiency and resilience of the power sector in Tripura.

SPORTS

78rd Chess Grandmaster

- 19-year-old Koustav Chatterjee of West Bengal became India's 78th chess Grandmaster, securing the third and final GM norm at the MPL 59th National Senior Chess Championship 2022 being held in New Delhi.
- He is the 10th Grandmaster from West Bengal.
- This was the third GM norm for Koustav Chatterjee and he also crossed 2500 Elo rating points.
- To become a GM a player has to secure three GM norms and 2500 live Elo rating points.
- Chess rating system is used in chess to estimate the strength and skill of a player.

- In chess, the Elo rating system is used to grade the players by international chess governing body FIDE.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Secretary General of the Asian Pacific Postal Union

- Dr Vinay Prakash Singh assumed the charge as the Secretary General of the Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) on 01 January 2023.
- This is the first time that an Indian is leading an international organization in the postal sector. Dr Singh will remain in office for 4 years.
- Former Member (Personnel), Postal Services Board, Department of Post Dr Vinay Prakash Singh was elected as the Secretary General during the 13th APPU Congress held in Bangkok during August- September 2022.
- Asian Pacific Postal Union (APPU) is an intergovernmental organization of 32-member countries of the Asian-Pacific region.
- APPU is the only Union of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) in the region, which is a specialized agency of the United Nations.

First Women Officer to be appointed in Siachen

- Fire and Fury Corps officer Captain Shiva Chauhan became the first woman officer to be operationally deployed at the highest battleground in Kumar Post on the Siachen glacier.
- The Siachen glacier lies in the Karakoram Range.
- It is 75 km (47 miles) long, which makes it the second longest nonpolar glacier in the world.
- The Siachen Glacier is the highest battleground on earth, where India and Pakistan have fought intermittently since 1984.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Global Family Day

- Global Family Day is celebrated every year on 01 January to start the year positively and to promote peace, love and unity among people.
- The Aim of the day is to strengthen familial ties.
- The day creates a sense of unity and brotherhood among nations and cultures through families.
- In 1999, the United Nations and its member states celebrated the Global Day of Families for the first time.