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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 07-08-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

NHAI Launches a Mobile Application Called 'Rajmargyatra'

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) launched a citizen-centric integrated mobile application named 'Rajmargyatra' to enhance the highway user experience.
- The 'Rajmargyatra' app is available for download on Google Play Store and iOS App Store and currently supports Hindi and English languages.
- 'Rajmargyatra' provides comprehensive information on Indian National Highways, including real-time weather conditions, broadcast notifications, nearest toll plazas, petrol pumps, hospitals, hotels and other essential services for safe and seamless travel.
- The app has an efficient complaint redressal system, which allows users to report highway-related issues with geo-tagged videos or photos.
- The complaints are dealt with in a time bound manner, any delay is reported to the higher authorities. Users can track the status of their complaints for transparency.
- 'Rajmargyatra' integrates FASTag services with various bank portals, enabling users to recharge FASTags, avail monthly passes and access other related banking services within the app.

Coal Ministry CPSEs to Achieve 7,281MW Renewable Energy Capacity

- Ministry of Coal has advised all its CPSEs to diligently draft a net zero plan for the coal mining sector.
- As per the national commitment, Coal PSUs have meticulously prepared three years action plan outlining specific renewable targets.
- Accordingly, Coal India Ltd (CIL), its subsidiaries and NLCIL have planned to install 3000MW and 3,731 MW of renewable energy capacity respectively.
- SCCL has also planned to install 550MW.
- This ambitious plan aims to achieve a total renewable energy capacity of over 7,281 MW by 2027.
- Presently, approx. 1600 MW renewable capacity has already been created till March 2023,

(CIL- 11, NLCIL- 1360, SCCL-224) and 1,769 MW has been awarded for this financial year i.e. 2023-24. Out of this, CIL has awarded 399 MW and NLCIL has awarded 1370 MW.
- An additional 2,553 MW capacity (1110 of NLCIL + 1443 CIL) is scheduled to be awarded in the next financial year i.e. 2024-25.
- CIL and NLCIL are planning to establish large solar parks in Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Shri Sarbananda Sonowal Launches Port Health Organisation (PHO)

- The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways (MoPSW) and Ayush, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal launched Port Health Organisation (PHO) module under Sagar Setu – National Logistics Portal (Marine) – in an attempt to enable a faster and simpler ecosystem to promote Ease of Doing Business (EODB).
- PHO will conduct disease surveillance, health inspection and quarantine measures to safeguard citizens and port workers.
- This Port Health Organization module has been envisaged as a part of 'Ease of Doing business' by covering features like requests for PHO clearance certificates, approval by PHO, online certification generation, tracking of request status etc.
- The PHO module will help the Shipping Agents, PHOs, Port Authorities, Customs etc. allowing easier access to functionalities of PHO clearance through an online process.
- This will help in collaborating with different departments & agencies for the accordance of approval etc.
- It will also ensure data mobility such that approvals and monitoring shall be paperless transparency.

GI Tags for Goa Mangoes and Bebinca, Crafts from Rajasthan

- Seven products from across India, including four from Rajasthan, were given the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Geographical Indications Registry.
- The GI tags were secured by 'Jalesar Dhatu Shilp' (a metal craft), 'Goa Mankurad Mango', 'Goa Bebinca', 'Udaipur Koftgari Metal Craft', 'Bikaner Kashidakari Craft', 'Jodhpur Bandhej Craft', and 'Bikaner Usta Kala Craft'.
- The application for the mank urad mango was filed by the All-Goa Mango Growers Association, Panaji.
- This variety of mango is also known as malcorada, cardozo mankurad, corado, and Goa mankur.
- The Portuguese named the fruit malcorada, which means 'poor coloured', and with time, it became mank urad aam (mango) in Konkani.
- The application for the Goa bebinca was filed by the All-Goa Bakers and Confectioners Association.
- Bebinca, also known as the 'queen of Goan desserts', is a traditional Indo-Portuguese pudding.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India to Participate in Ukraine Peace Talks Hosted by Saudi Arabia

- India has been invited to participate in Ukraine peace talks hosted by Saudi Arabia, scheduled for 05 August and 06August 2023.
- The invitation comes as Saudi Arabia reaches out to Western nations, Ukraine, and some major developing countries to discuss the peace plan put forward by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy earlier in the year.
- Arindam Bagchi, spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs confirmed India's attendance at the meeting to be held in Jeddah.
- By engaging in peace talks, India aims to support efforts towards finding a peaceful resolution to the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.
- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been actively advocating his 10-point peace plan, even discussing it with US President Joe Biden and other world leaders.
- Zelenskyy has been urging the international community to come together for a global peace summit based on his proposed plan.

UNESCO Recommends Adding Venice to 'Heritage Danger List'

- The United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has recommended including Venice, a popular destination in Italy, in the 'heritage danger list'.

- Climate change has become one of the major problems of Venice.

- UNESCO has recommended the Italian government to increase efforts for securing the historic city and its surrounding lagoons.

- As per the UNESCO report, overwhelming tourism, overdevelopment and rising sea levels due to climate change are major risks for Venice.

- These risks are deteriorating and damaging building structures and urban areas.
- In recent years, Venice also witnessed a rise in weather-related problems.
- The UNESCO report blames the Italian authorities for a 'lack of strategic vision' in solving the problems of Venice.

BANKING

RBI Slaps ₹2,000 Crore Fine on Major Indian PSUs

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed penalties on four major Indian public sector undertakings for delayed reporting of their overseas investments.
- The companies that have been fined by RBI include ONGC Videsh Limited, Indian Oil Corporation Limited, GAIL (India) Limited and Oil India Limited and the total amount of fine imposed by RBI is ₹2,000 crore.
- Delayed reporting of overseas investments has led to restrictive measures by RBI, affecting further remittances and transfers till discrepancies are resolved.
- One of the regulatory measures taken by RBI is to stop outward remittances.
- Authorised Dealer banks have been instructed not to facilitate any outward remittances or financial commitments by persons resident in India to foreign entities till the reporting issues are regularised.

Axis Bank Partners with Kiwi to Bolster 'Credit on UPI'

- Axis Bank, one of the largest private sector banks in India partners with National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) and Kiwi, the revolutionary credit on Unified Payment Interface (UPI) platform to launch the Axis Bank KWIK credit card that offers credit card rewards and the convenience of UPI's fast and secure payment.
- The end-to-end digital payment solution aims at enhancing the payment experience for customers.
- The partnership enables Kiwi users to seamlessly access the RuPay lifetime free virtual Axis Bank KWIK credit card through the app.
- With its innovative features, users can make merchant payments within the Kiwi app using their credit cards via UPI, offering a virtual payment experience and eliminating the need for physical cards.

RBI Nods to Amalgamation of Navanirman Co-op Urban Bank

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has sanctioned the Scheme of Amalgamation of The Navanirman Co-operative Urban Bank Limited, Hyderabad, Telangana with Rajadhani Co-op. Urban Bank Ltd, Hyderabad, Telangana.
- RBI has the discretionary powers to approve the voluntary amalgamation of Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs) under the provisions of Section 44A read with Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

FIDE Rankings

- D. Gukesh surpasses Viswanathan Anand to become India's highest ranked chess player.
- The feat was achieved through victory in the second round of the FIDE World Cup.
- Gukesh's live rating has reached 2755.9 and he has secured 9th position in the world and Viswanathan Anand's rating is 2754.0 which has made him 10th
- This is the second time since 1986 that Anand has been removed from the top post in India.
- Gukesh gained 2.5 rating points and reached a live rating of 2755.9.
- He is the youngest player to reach a live rating of 2750.

Top Spot as the Source Market for Tourism in Sri Lanka

- India has maintained the top spot as the source market for tourism in Sri Lanka.
- As per data released by Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority, Tourist arrivals from India have crossed 1 lakh 39 thousand.
- This translates to over 18 per cent market share out of 7.67 lakh tourist arrivals into the island nation.
- India accounted for 23461 tourist arrivals in July which was ahead of other countries.
- The connectivity between the two countries has improved over the last few months as air travel resumed between Jaffna and Chennai in December 2022.
- Connectivity between Colombo and Mumbai has also been improved with daily flights operating in the sector.
- In addition, India-Sri Lanka Joint Committee established under an MOU on Passenger Transportation by Sea held a virtual meeting last month with a focus on the resumption of ferry services between the two countries connecting mutually agreed points.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Radio Frequency Seeker of Akash to DRDO

- The Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) has handed over the first Radio Frequency (RF) Seeker of Akash – the Next Generation Weapon System produced at its newly commissioned state-of-the-art Seeker Facility Centre (SFC) to the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO).

- Seeker is a critical and technology intensive subsystem used in Surface-to-Air Missiles and Air-to-Air Missiles for target tracking in the terminal phase.

- The RF Seeker has been designed by DRDO's Research Centre Imarat, and produced by BDL at its state-of-the-art Seeker Facility Centre set up at BDL, Kanchanbagh Unit in Hyderabad.

- Akash-NG is a surface-to-air Missile.

- It is a new variant of the Akash missile that can strike targets at a distance of around 60 km and fly at a speed of up to Mach 2.5.

- It is developed by Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL), Hyderabad in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories & being produced by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL).
- Akash is India's 1st indigenously produced medium range Surface to Air missile that can engage multiple targets from multiple directions.

OBITUARY

Noted Marathi Poet Namdeo Dhondo Mahanor

- Noted Marathi poet and lyricist Namdeo Dhondo Mahanor, popularly known as Na Dho Mahanor passed away at the age of 81 in Pune, Maharashtra.
- He had also been a member of the Maharashtra legislative council in 1978.
- He experimented with art and agriculture.
- He penned several popular poems and songs, including "Jagala Prem Arpave", "Ganga Wahu De Nirmal" and "Divelaganichi Vel", and also wrote songs for Marathi movies like "Ek Hota Vidushak", "Jait Re Jait", "Sarja" and other.
- In 1991, Mahanor was awarded the Padma Shri, the fourth-highest civilian honour of India, by the president of India.
- He was a recipient of the Krishi Bhushan award of the Maharashtra government.