DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 13-12-2024

NATIONAL NEWS

India to Launch ‘One Nation, One Subscription’ Initiative for Research Access

Starting January 1, 2025, around 8 crore students from state-funded higher education institutions (HEIs), including universities and IITs, will gain access to research papers from leading global journals under the government’s ‘One Nation, One Subscription’ (ONOS) initiative.

The initiative will be coordinated by the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET), an autonomous inter-university center under the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The Central government funds the Rs. 6,000 crore schemes for a three-year period.

Students and researchers from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities will gain access, promoting core and interdisciplinary research.

In the first phase, over 13,400 international journals from renowned publishers like Elsevier, Springer Nature, and Wiley will be available to students, researchers, and faculty.

Disciplines covered include science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), medicine, social sciences, management, and humanities.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India-UK Collaboration on Electric Propulsion for Indian Navy

India and the United Kingdom have signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) to cooperate on the design and development of electric propulsion systems for the Indian Navy.

This agreement, signed in Portsmouth, underscores the growing partnership between the two nations in advancing naval technologies.

The agreement aims to foster co-design, co-creation, and co-production of advanced electric propulsion capabilities for future naval ships.

The Indian Navy's Landing Platform Docks are set to feature full-electric propulsion systems.

These will be constructed at Indian shipyards as part of the initiative to promote indigenous shipbuilding.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Power Grid Partners with IIT Roorkee

Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL) has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with IIT Roorkee for a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative valued at 20.73 crore.

The collaboration aims to foster technological innovation by setting up three state-of-the-art Centres of Excellence (CoEs) at the Institute's Computer Centre.

Centres of Excellence (CoEs) include Command-and-Control Centre for campus UHS networks, IoT Research & Application Centre for advanced studies in the Internet of Things and Cyber Security and Mobile Security Lab for hackathons and awareness initiatives.

These CoEs will support cutting-edge research and development and benefit approximately 11,000 students on campus and beyond.

The CoEs will enhance the institution's technological capabilities and reinforce its commitment to innovation and higher education.

Indian Institute Of Spices Research Introduces Surasa

IISR Surasa is a new ginger variety developed by the ICAR – Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR) through a farmers participatory breeding programme.

The original rhizome of Surasa was discovered in Kodancherry, Kozhikode by farmer John Joseph.

The research and development took over six years of testing and trials in various regions.

It has excellent organoleptic properties, making it more palatable when consumed.

It is the first ginger variety in India developed exclusively for use as a vegetable.

The variety is approved by the Kerala State Varietal Release Committee for cultivation in Kerala.

IIT Madras Unveils World’s Most Detailed 3D High-Resolution Images

Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) became the first research organization globally to release the most detailed 3D high-resolution images of the fetal brain.

A total of 5,132 brain sections were captured digitally using advanced brain mapping technology developed by the Sudha Gopalakrishnan Brain Centre at IIT Madras.

The data offers 0.5-micron accuracy and allows analysis at the cellular level.

This accomplishment highlights the potential of Indian R&D to produce world-class science and technology and demonstrates the success of the public-private-philanthropy partnership model.

The project focused on five fetal brains in the second trimester, specifically between 14 and 24 weeks.

The dataset generated provides significant insights into neurodevelopmental disorders and advances in fetal medicine.

The release of the dataset, named DHARANI, is a significant advancement in human neuroscience research and is the largest publicly accessible digital dataset of the human fetal brain, enhancing current knowledge by 20X.

BANKING

All India Bank Employees' Association Proposes A 3-Year Ban On Account Openings

The All India Bank Employees' Association (AIBEA) has urged the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) to blacklist customers who attack or abuse bank staff, closing their accounts and preventing them from opening new accounts for at least 3 years.

AIBEA expressed concern over recent incidents where bank staff were physically assaulted and verbally abused by customers.

They emphasized that staff are working to earn a living, not to be victims of such attacks.

The attacks include both physical assaults and instances of abusive language directed at bank staff, including female employees.

A Union Bank of India official attacked by a customer over tax deductions.

A Canara Bank female staff member assaulted when a customer demanded a change to his CIBIL score, which was not under the bank's control.

These incidents have created a demoralizing effect on bank employees, with staff feeling that bank management is more focused on impaired loans than on the safety and well-being of its employees.

Phonepe Introduces Dengue and Malaria Insurance Plan

PhonePe launched a Dengue and Malaria Insurance Plan starting at ₹59 per year on its platform.

The plan offers comprehensive coverage of up to ₹1 lakh for medical expenses related to vector-borne and air-borne diseases, including Dengue and Malaria.

The plan is aimed at providing financial protection to users, particularly in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, against unexpected medical expenses due to these diseases.

The plan covers over 10 vector-borne and air-borne diseases, providing extensive health protection year-round.

The plan is available at an affordable premium, making it accessible to a wide range of users.

RBI To Integrate FX-Retail Platform With NPCI Bharat

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed to link the FX-Retail platform with the Bharat Connect platform of the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

The integration aims to enhance transparency and fairness in foreign exchange pricing, particularly for individuals and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

Launched in 2019 by the Clearing Corporation of India Limited (CCIL), the FX-Retail platform provides an internet-based application for buying and selling foreign exchange.

It serves a variety of users, including individuals, corporates, trusts, cooperative banks, and institutional investors.

The linkage between the FX-Retail platform and Bharat Connect will allow users to access and transact on the FX-Retail platform through integrated mobile apps, internet banking, and non-bank payment systems.

The first phase of this integration will include a pilot that facilitates the purchase of US Dollars against Indian Rupees by individuals and sole proprietors.

The linkage will expand the reach of the FX-Retail platform, offering enhanced user experience and wider accessibility for foreign exchange transactions.

AWARDS & PRIZES

2024 Nobel Prize winners Honoured in Stockholm and Oslo

The winners of the 2024 Nobel Prizes were awarded in a ceremony held in the Swedish capital city of Stockholm and the Norwegian capital of Oslo on 10 December 2024.

The Nobel Prize instituted in the memory of Alfred Noble by the Noble Foundation is conferred to the winners on 10th December every year.

The Stockholm-born Swedish inventor and businessman Alfred Nobel died on 10 December 1896.

The prize winner of Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine and Economic Science is honoured at a ceremony in Stockholm, while the Peace prize winner is facilitated in Oslo.

Physics- John Hopfield (American), Geoffrey Hinton (British-Canadian Citizen)

Chemistry- David Baker (American), Demis Hassabis (British), John Jumper (American)

Physiology or Medicine- Victor Ambros (American), Gary Ruvkun (American)

Literature- Han Kang (South Korea)

Economics- Daron Acemoglu (Turkish American), Simon Johnson (British-American) and James Robinson (American)

Peace- Nihon Hidankyo(organisation of Japan)

The winner of the Nobel Prize gets a cash prize of 11 million Swedish kroner. If there is more than one winner, then the prize money is shared.

JC Daniel Award 2023 for Lifetime Contributions to Malayalam Cinema

Renowned filmmaker Shaji N Karun has been awarded the JC Daniel Award 2023, the highest honor in Kerala cinema, for his extraordinary lifetime contributions to Malayalam cinema.

This recognition celebrates his pivotal role in shaping new-wave cinema and bringing Malayalam films to international acclaim.

The award includes a purse of ₹5 lakh, a citation, and a statuette.

It is presented annually by the Kerala State Government to honor lifetime contributions to cinema.

Shaji N Karun's films have consistently earned international acclaim, bringing Malayalam cinema to the global stage.

SPORTS

Khelo India Winter Games 2025

The Union Territory of Ladakh and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will jointly host the Khelo India Winter Games 2025.

The 2024 edition of the Khelo India Winter Games was also co-hosted by Ladkah and Jammu and Kashmir.

Before 2024, the Khelo India Winter Games was only held at Gulmarg in Jammu and Kashmir.

The 2025 Khelo India Winter Games will be important for athletes as it will also be a selection event for the forthcoming Milano-Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics in Italy in February 2026.

Bihar will host the Khelo India Youth and Para Games in April 2025.

Khelo India Winter Games is different from the National Winter Games. The Indian Olympic Association organises the National Games, and Uttarakhand will host the next National Winter Games.

The Khelo India Winter Games 2025 will be held in two phases, and a total of six events will take place.

In the first phase of the Winter Games, Leh in Ladakh will hold ice events- ice hockey and ice skiing - from 23-27 January 2025.

In the second phase of the Games, Gulmarg, Jammu and Kashmir will host snow events -alpine skiing, Nordic skiing, ski mountaineering and snowboarding from 22-25 February 2025.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Universal Health Coverage Day

Universal Health Coverage Day 2024 is observed on the 12th of December 2024.

This year's theme, “Health: It's on the government”, underscores the role governments play in ensuring that no one is forced to choose between health care and necessities such as food

The first healthcare system was established by a German named Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in 1883.

The insurance model, called the ‘Bismarckian system’, required everyone to have insurance for their medical expenses, which was similar to the current-day non-profit health insurance companies.

Universal Health Coverage Day was originally promoted by the World Health Organization.