DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 15-07-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

50th GST Council Meeting in New Delhi

- The 50th GST Council meeting chaired by the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman was held in New Delhi.
- The meeting is being attended by Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary, Finance Ministers of States and UTs, and Senior officials.
- In February 2023, the 49th GST Council met under the Chairpersonship of Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman in New Delhi.
- In that meeting, the government decided to clear the entire pending balance GST compensation of 16 thousand 982 crore rupees for June 2022 to States and Union territories.
- In its recommendations, the Council had also decided to lower the GST slabs for Rab, and pencil sharpener.

The Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) Bankers'

- The Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Jitendra Singh inaugurated a bankers' awareness workshop at Srinagar.
- The two-day workshop is organized by the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) for officers of the State Bank of India at Winter Hall, Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Center, Srinagar.
- The objective of the workshops is to spread awareness of the various rules and procedures relevant to Pension Disbursing Banks and also the steps being taken by the Government of India to ensure "Ease of Living" for Pensioners.
- Bankers' Awareness workshops, on similar lines, will be conducted in collaboration with other Pension Disbursing Banks in 2023-24.

- The workshop is also expected to firm up a road map towards integrating 17 banks with the single-window Integrated Pensioners' Portal of DoPPW with the objective of providing pensioners with a host of services related to pension and banking.
- Jitendra Singh inaugurated the integration of the SBI pension seva portal with the Integrated Pensioners Portal in October 2022.

India's First Artificial Intelligence News Anchor – Lisa

- Odisha Television Limited (OTV) has introduced the state's first artificial intelligence (AI) news anchor named Lisa.

- The introduction of Lisa, the AI news anchor, took place at a ceremony held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

- The introduction of Lisa, the first AI anchor in Odisha's regional television broadcasting arena, signifies a new era in television journalism.

- It is developed by the media house in collaboration with a Mumbai, Maharashtra based startup, Lisa has the potential to speak in multiple languages.

- Lisa currently presents news in Odia and English on OTV's television and digital platforms.
- However, efforts are underway to enhance Lisa's proficiency in Odia.

Atal Innovation Mission Launches 'ATL Industry Visit'

- The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and Bayer inaugurated a one-of-a-kind industrial visit project called Atal Tinkering Labs at Bayer's production site in Vapi, Gujarat.
- According to NITI Aayog, 'It is critical to raise public awareness in order to fuel the manufacturing policy and realize its potential.'
- Bayer has partnered with Niti Aayog since 2021 to support various initiatives of the Atal Innovation Mission.
- To nurture and strengthen science-based learning, Bayer has adopted a total of 125 ATL schools in seven states.
- The 50 schools adopted in the later phase are all-girls schools aligned with Bayer's commitment to Diversity and Inclusion and empowering women.
- Over the last year and a half, Bayer in partnership with its implementing partners has also trained about 150 ATL coordinators on ATL Curriculum.
- Bayer has opened its manufacturing and production plants and research centers across Vapi, Shamirpet, Chandippa, and Bangalore to the ATL students to provide first-hand exposure to experience how technology, automation, and innovation are leveraged by the industry.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Status On Asia-Pacific Money Laundering

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has become the first Arab country to receive observer status in the Asia/Pacific Group (APG) on Money Laundering, a regional body similar to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).
- The UAE is participating as an observer at the plenary session of the APG, which is currently taking place in Vancouver, Canada.
- Obtaining observer status reflects the UAE's commitment to international cooperation in combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism.
- Observer status is awarded to countries that actively and cooperatively combat financial crime, and the UAE has demonstrated this through its participation in organizations such as MENAFATF and other multilateral fora.

BANKING

Utkarsh Small Finance Bank’s ₹500-Crore Initial Public Offering

- Utkarsh Small Finance Bank (SFB) will launch its ₹500 crore initial public offering (IPO) on 12 July 2023 with the price band being set at ₹23-25.
- The IPO, entirely a fresh issue of shares, will close for subscription on 14 July 2023.
- Minimum Bid Lot is 600 equity shares.
- While not less than 75% of the issue would be available for allocation to QIBs, up to 15% is reserved for non-institutional investors and the balance 10% for retail individual investors.
- The IPO proceeds will be used to expand the bank’s business over the next 2 years and help it become a multi-product bank.
- As of March 2023, it had operations in 26 states and union territories, employed 15,424 people at 830 banking locations, and served 3.59 million customers, the majority of whom lived in rural and semi-rural areas, mostly in the states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand.

SPORTS

Kerala’s First Woman Cricketer to Play for India

- Minnu Mani creates history as the first woman cricketer from Kerala to represent the Indian senior team.
- Her debut performance includes a wicket in the first over, impressing teammates and coaches alike.
- As India and Bangladesh women’s cricket teams were preparing for the first T20I in Mirpur, far away at Mananthavady in Kerala’ s Wayanad district, the Mani household suddenly came alive.
- Nonetheless, Minnu finished with respectable figures of 3-0-21-1, contributing to India’s effort in restricting Bangladesh to 114/5.
- India later secured a comfortable seven-wicket victory, chasing down the target in just 16.2 overs.
- Hailing from the Kurichiya tribe in Wayanad, Minnu had previously made waves by being the sole player from Kerala to participate in the Women’s Premier League (WPL), where she was bought by the Delhi Capitals for a staggering Rs 30 lakh.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor Award

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded the highest French award 'Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour' by the President of the Republic of France, Emmanuel Macron.
- Prime Minister Modi was honored at an award ceremony held at the Elysee Palace in Paris.
- The Prime Minister thanked President Macron on behalf of the people of India for this distinguished honour.
- Prime Minister Modi is on an official visit to France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 13 to 15 July 2023.
- The Prime Minister is the Chief Guest at the Bastille Day Parade on 14 July 2023, in which a contingent of the Indian Armed Forces from the three Services is also participating.

DEFENCE

INS Sunayana Participated in Operation Southern Readiness – 2023

- INS Sunayna participated in 'Operation Southern Readiness 2023' conducted by the Combined Maritime Force (CMF) being conducted off Seychelles from 10 July to 12 July.
- It was aimed at strengthening multilateral relations and enhancing cooperation through CMF exercise in the region.
- During the visit, personnel from the participating navies of the US, Italy, UK, Seychelles Defense Forces and Marine Police, EUNAVFOR member states were involved in extensive professional interactions, subject matter expert exchanges and visits.
- During this, a joint yoga session was conducted onboard with the participation of the ship's crew as well as personnel from Seychelles Defense Forces and CMF.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

A New Book 'Prism: The Ancestral Abode of Rainbow'

- National Award-winning filmmaker-writer Vinod Mankara's new book titled "Prism: The Ancestral Abode of Rainbow" was released from the rocket launchpad of Satish Dhawan Space Center (SDSC) in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

- The book release coincided with preparations for India's upcoming moon mission, Chandrayaan-3, at SDSC-SHAR.

- ISRO Chairman S Somnath released the book by handing it over to Vikram Sarabhai Space Center (VSSC) Director S Unnikrishnan Nair.

- The book, "Prism: The Ancestral Abode of the Rainbow", is a collection of science articles, providing readers with unique insights and perspectives.

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