



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 17-08-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

MeitY Secretary Launches the 'Graphene-Aurora Program'

- Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) Secretary Shri Alkesh Kumar Sharma launched the 'Graphene-Aurora program' at a function in Maker Village Kochi, Kerala.
- The program shall be implemented by Digital University Kerala with joint funding from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), the Government of India and the Government of Kerala and Industry partners, with a total budget outlay of Rs 94.85 Crore, wherein, Carborundum Pvt Limited joined as one of the main industry partners.
- Along with the startup products developed, the technologies and products also developed at research and development centres like India Innovation Centre Graphene (IICG), set up at Makers Village, Kochi shall be considered for commercialization.

'A-HELP' Programme and Infertility Camp for Livestock

- Union Minister for Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala has unveiled the 'A-HELP' (Accredited Agent for Health and Extension of Livestock Production) programme along with an Infertility Camp, in the State of Gujarat.
- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India, is spearheading these initiatives as part of the Pashudhan Jagrati Abhiyaan under Inclusive Development.
- Union Minister Shri Parshottam Rupala highlighted the pivotal role played by livestock and women in the comprehensive development of the livestock sector, particularly in Gujarat.
- The 'A-HELP' programme and the Infertility Camp can mark a significant stride towards empowering women, enhancing livestock productivity, and advancing the socio-economic landscape of the region.
- The 'A-HELP' programme aims to empower women by engaging them as trained agents who contribute significantly to disease control, artificial insemination under the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM), animal tagging, and livestock insurance.

Union Government to Open 25000 Jan Aushadhi Kendras

- Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during his Independence Day speech at Red Fort said that the government has plans to increase the number of 'Jan Aushadhi Kendras' from 10,000 to 25,000.
- He said Jan Aushadhi Kendras gave a new power to the people special the middle class. If someone is diagnosed with diabetes then a monthly bill of Rs. 3000 gets accrued.

- Through Jan Aushadhi Kendras, the medicines that cost Rs 100, we are giving at Rs 10 to Rs 15.
- The Government will launch the Vishwakarma scheme with an allocation of ₹13,000 to 15,000 crore in the next month for those with traditional skills.
- The government is working to increase the number of 'Jan Aushadhi Kendra' (subsidised medicine shops) from 10,000 to 25,000.

Telangana Government Announces Farm Loan Waiver Up to Rs 99999

- Telangana government has announced a farm loan waiver of up to 99 thousand 999 rupees. It will be cleared within the next 45 days.
- The Government has released over 5,800 crore rupees towards this end. The decision will benefit over 9 lakh farmers.
- It will fulfil the electoral commitment made by Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao to waive farm loans of up to one lakh rupees.
- The amount will be transferred directly into the loan accounts of farmers.
- With the latest decision, farm loans up to 99,999, amounting to 7753.43 crore rupees, of over 16 lakh 66 thousand farmers will be cleared.
- During its previous term between 2014 and 2018, the BR's government waived crop loans up to Rs 1 lakh through the disbursement of 16,144 crore rupees benefiting over 35 lakh farmers in the State.
- During the 2018 Assembly elections, Chandrashekhar Rao had promised to implement a crop loan waiver scheme for loans up to one lakh rupees in a phased manner.
- An official release stated that the implementation was delayed by external factors like the COVID pandemic and subsequent lockdown among others.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Indian High Commission Celebrates Independence Day in Bangladesh

- The 77th Independence Day of India was celebrated by the High Commission of India in Bangladesh on 15 August 2023.
- A large number of Indian community members took part in the celebrations at the Chancery building.
- This year, the Independence Day celebrations were held with great fervour as part of the ongoing celebrations of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.
- High Commissioner, Shri Pranay Verma unfurled the national flag and read out excerpts from the Hon'ble President's Address to the Nation.
- Artists of the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC) performed patriotic songs on the occasion.
- The Assistant High Commissions (AHC) of India in Sylhet, Khulna, Chattogram and Rajshahi also celebrated Independence Day.

BANKING

List of Public Sector Lenders in Loan and Deposit Growth

- Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) has emerged as the top performer among public sector lenders in loan and deposit growth of 25% in percentage terms during the first quarter of the current financial year.
- The deposit and advances of the Pune-based lender are the highest by any public sector bank (PSB) during the April-June quarter.
- With a growth rate of 24.98%, the gross domestic advances of the bank rose to Rs 1,75,676 crore at the end of June 2023
- It was followed by UCO Bank with 20.70% growth, while Bank of Baroda (BoB) with 16.80% and Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) with 16.21% growth were at 3rd and 4th spot respectively.
- State Bank of India (SBI) stood at the 5th spot with 15.08% rise in domestic advances growth.
- However, SBI's total loans were about 16 times higher at Rs 28,20,433 crore, as compared to Rs 1,75,676 crore of BoM in absolute terms.

- In terms of Retail-Agriculture-MSME (RAM) loans, BoM has the highest growth of 25.44% followed by Punjab & Sind Bank with 19.64% and Punjab National Bank (PNB) at 19.41% on a Y-o-Y basis.
- With regard to deposit growth, BoM witnessed a 24.73% growth and mobilised Rs 2,44,365 crore at the end of June 2023.

RBI Partners with McKinsey and Company and Accenture Solutions

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has selected global consultancy firms McKinsey and Company India LLP and Accenture Solutions Private Limited India to develop systems using artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning for its supervisory functions.
- RBI is planning to use advanced analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning for analyzing a huge database and improve regulatory supervision over banks and NBFCs.
- For this, the RBI is planning to hire external experts.
- RBI had shortlisted 7 applicants to participate in the request for proposal process (RFP) for the selection of consultant(s).
- Out of the 7 applicants, McKinsey and Accenture have been awarded the contract and the value of the contract is about Rs 91 crore.
- AI and ML technologies are used for real-time data reporting, effective data management and dissemination.
- For data analytics, these are being used for monitoring supervised firm-specific risks, including liquidity risks, market risks, credit exposures and concentration risks; misconduct analysis; and mis-selling of products.

Bandhan Bank Partnered with Government of Odisha

- India's leading private lender Bandhan Bank has announced its strategic partnership with the Odisha Government to enhance payment solutions for Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) Limited.
- The aim is to introduce improved convenience for tourists and streamline payment processes.
- As a part of this partnership, Bandhan Bank has introduced Point of Sale (PoS) machines at key tourist destinations including Puri, Bhubaneswar, Konark, Chilka, and Gopalpur.
- The integration of these PoS machines is set to expedite payment collections from tourists, streamlining the process for both visitors and OTDC officials.
- The Electronic Data Capture (EDC) machines will also help prevent revenue loss for OTDC, which may be caused by the lack of cash carried by the tourists. This initiative aligns with the nation's vision of becoming a cashless economy.

AWARDS & PRIZES

President Approves 76 Gallantry Awards

- President Smt Droupadi Murmu has approved 76 Gallantry awards to Armed Forces and Central Armed Police Forces personnel on Independence Day 2023.
- These include four Kirti Chakra (posthumous), 11 Shaurya Chakras, including five posthumous, two Bar to Sena Medals (Gallantry), 52 Sena Medals (Gallantry), three Nao Sena Medals (Gallantry) and four Vayu Sena Medals (Gallantry).
- The President has also approved 30 Mention-in-Despatches to the Army, including to Army dog Madhu (Posthumous), and one to Air Force personnel for their significant contributions to different military operations.
- The operations include Operation Rakshak, Operation Snow Leopard, Operation Casualty Evacuation, Operation Mount Chomo, Operation Pangsau Pass, Operation Meghdoot, Operation Orchid, Operation Kalisham Valley, Rescue Operation and Operation Evacuation.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Chandrayaan 3 Mission by ISRO Assumes Near-Circular Orbit

- The Chandrayaan 3 mission by ISRO has assumed a near-circular orbit.
- The spacecraft that was moving around the moon in an elliptical orbit of 174 km into 1437 km was moved closer to the Moon by retrofitting onboard engines last night to take a nearly circular orbit of 151 km into 179 km.
- ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network in Bengaluru will take up the next orbit reduction manoeuvre on 16 August 2023 at around 08:30.
- Afterwards, the spacecraft will enter a lunar circular orbit of 100 km into 100 km.

- ISRO aims to land Chandrayaan 3 lander softly on the surface of the Moon on August 23rd at the south pole.
- India will become the fourth nation to land its payload on the Moon.
- Russia's Luna 25 spacecraft launched on August 11 is also heading towards the Moon and is expected to land on the Lunar south pole on August 21st.
- The country whose spacecraft lands first on the Lunar south pole will become the first country to achieve this milestone.

OBITUTARY

Telugu, Sanskrit Scholar Kandlakunta Alaha Singaracharyulu

- Eminent writer, scholar and academician Kandlakunta Alaha Singaracharyulu passed away due to age-related ailments at his residence in Hyderabad.
- He was 93.
- The funeral was performed at the Autonagar crematorium near LB Nagar.
- He is survived by six children including four sons and two daughters.



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