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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 17-12-2022

NATIONAL NEWS

Forest Department Launches 'Vanikaran' Project

- The Forest department in association with Noolpuzha grama panchayat has launched the 'Vanikaran' (afforestation) Project in Kerala.
- The main objective is to root out invasive plants, especially Senna spectabilis, and restore natural forests.
- The project was being executed on 30 hectares of forest land under the Sulthan Bathery forest range of the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary.
- The sanctuary has various exotic invasive plants, including Senna spectabilis, Eupatorium, Mikania micrantha and Lantana Camara were posing a serious threat to the local species of trees.

Tobacco-Free Zone

- The All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in New Delhi has been declared a 'Tobacco-Free Zone'.
- Strict action will be taken against doctors, permanent or contractual staff and security staff found smoking or chewing tobacco in the hospital premises.
- Besides, smoking and spitting tobacco on the premises of the AIIMS will be a punishable offence for the patients, attendants and visitors and the erring persons will be fined Rs 200.
- All the heads of departments have been requested to ask the staff working under them to strictly follow the guidelines.

Mou Signed Between CCI and TEXPROCIL

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) Limited and TEXPROCIL on Branding, Traceability and Certification of 'Kasturi Cotton India' in Varanasi.
- This collaboration will benefit cotton farmers who will get the actual value of their produce due to brand building and quality assurance.
- The MoU will encourage the industry to work on the principle of self-regulation by owning complete responsibility of Traceability, Certification and Branding of Indian cotton, Ministry of Textiles.
- The Government of India will contribute an equal share of Rs 15 crore over a period of three cotton seasons starting from 2022-23 to 2024-25.
- India's premium Cotton is known as 'Kasturi Cotton' in the world cotton Trade.

Airbnb Sign MOU with Goa Government

- Airbnb has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Tourism, Government of Goa to jointly promote Goa as a high potential tourism destination in the world.
- Airbnb, an American multinational company which stands for Air Bed and Breakfast.
- It is an online marketplace that connects people who want to rent out their homes to tourists who intend to visit that locality.
- The Airbnb will help the Goa Tourism Department in developing such homestay capacity across the state.
- The local people will be trained to offer quality tourism experience to both domestic and international tourists. It will boost the income of the local population.

PMKKK Renamed as PM Vikas Scheme

- Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Ko Kaam Karyakram (PMKKK) has been named as Pradhan Mantri Virasat Ka Samvardhan (PM VIKAS) Scheme.
- This integrated scheme amalgamates the five earlier schemes of the Ministry – Seekho aur Kamao, Ustad, Hamari Dharohar, Nai Roshni and Nai Manzil.
- The scheme has been approved by the cabinet for the period of 15th Finance Commission.
- PM VIKAS aims to improve the livelihood of minorities, especially artisan communities by using components of skill development, education, women leadership and entrepreneurship.
- These components complement each other in the ultimate objective of the scheme to enhance the income of the beneficiaries and provide assistance by facilitating credit and market linkages.

Youth Co:Lab for Young Entrepreneurs

- The 5th edition of Youth Co:Lab, Asia Pacific's largest youth innovation initiative was jointly launched by Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), NITI Aayog and UNDP India.

- All young innovators and entrepreneurs are invited to participate in this incredible opportunity to unleash their creativity and build their solutions through Youth Co:Lab

- It is an initiative launched in 2019 by UNDP India in partnership with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog.
- Its aim is to establish a common agenda for Asia-Pacific countries to invest in and empower youth to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through leadership, social innovation and entrepreneurship.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India Signs Agreement with Nepal Government

- The Embassy of India and Nepal government's Ministry of Federal Affairs and General

Administration have signed 3 Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) to collaborate on projects in the education sector.

- The collaboration will also focus on the healthcare and drinking water sectors.

- The projects shall be implemented at 101.79 million Nepalese rupees (NRs).

- The three projects include

- The construction of the Shree Janata Belaka Secondary School building in the Udayapur district, Nepal.
- The construction of Ngonga Thenchowk Chholing meditation centre in the Soulukhumbu district, Nepal.
- The construction of Lisnekhola Tikasung Dangchet Jharlang water supply project in Dhading district, Nepal.

BANKING

Universal Sompo General Insurance Partners with Zopper

- Universal Sompo General Insurance Company Limited has partnered with an insurance infrastructure Application Programming Interface (API) platform, Zopper to roll out a special integrated offering for customers.
- The aim is to cover 1 million assets by offering users personalized insurance solutions, as well as a hassle-free customer experience from policy generation to claims management
- Through this partnership, customers will have access to buy insurance seamlessly along with an option to purchase a protection plan.

Indusind Bank Enters Co-Lending Pact with SV Credit Line

- The non-banking finance company SV CreditLine Limited (SVCL) and the private sector lender IndusInd Bank have signed a co-lending collaboration for a ₹500 crore loan targeted towards women borrowers.

- The agreement will help rural women access affordable loans that they could use for a wide range of economic activities such as agriculture, animal husbandry, trading and local manufacturing, among others.

- SVCL provides a variety of small credit facilities to women in the low-income segment with an annual household income of Rs. 125,000 in rural areas and Rs. 200,000 in urban areas.

ASK Capital Gets Central Bank of Ireland Approval

- ASK Capital has received approval from the Central Bank of Ireland to launch an India-based fund ASK Indian Entrepreneur Fund through the UCITS route.
- It is to raise USD 500 million from global investors to take high-return bets on enterprises promoted by Indian entrepreneurs over the next 3 years.
- ASK is the fourth asset or wealth management firm in India to receive approval for a UCITS (Undertakings for Collective Investment in Transferable Securities) fund.
- UCITS is a regulatory framework of the European Commission for the management and sale of mutual funds.

SPORTS

Most Written-About Athlete in 2022

- According to the World Athletics, Tokyo Olympics gold medalist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra of India was the most written about track and field athlete in 2022, displacing the Jamaican legend Usain Bolt from the top lists.
- There were 812 articles written about Neeraj Chopra in 2022.
- Neeraj Chopra was followed by Jamaican trio of Olympic champion Elaine Thompson-Herah (751 articles), 100m world champion Shelley-Ann Fraser-Pryce (698 articles) and 200m world champion Shericka Jackson (679 articles).

AWARDS & PRIZES

SpiceJet - ‘Safety Performer of the Year’

- SpiceJet was named ‘Safety Performer of the Year’ by GMR Delhi Airport Awards for being the top performer among self-handling airlines and for dramatically reducing ground safety infractions.

- The SpiceJet ground handling team at Delhi Airport accomplished the result by focusing on continuous quality improvement, innovation and hard work.

- The airline was the only scheduled Indian airline to be audited by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the United Nations' aviation agency.
- SpiceJet's safety systems assessment aided India in achieving its highest-ever safety ranking in an ICAO audit.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Vijay Diwas

- Vijay Diwas 2022 is observed every year on 16 December.

- This year marks the 50th edition.

- Vijay Diwas is celebrated for the remembrance of the victory of the Indian Armed Forces in 'Operation: Vijay' against the infiltrating Pakistani troops.
- Pakistani troops attacked 11 Indian airfields that proved the war on 03 December 1971.
- The war ended in just 13 days which is considered one of the shortest wars in history.