DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 18-11-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

Jammu & Kashmir LG Manoj Inaugurates Tribal festival Chhau

· The 'Chhau Parv' was opened in Srinagar's Tagore Hall by Manoj Sinha, the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir.

· The 'Chhau Parv' Festival and Seminar on Chhau Dances and Folk Dances were held at Srinagar's Tagore Hall by Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, and National Academy of Music, Dance, and Drama in association with Chhau Kendra, Chandankiyari, Bokaro, Jharkhand.

· Chhau dance is an eastern Indian practice that represents abstract concepts, local folklore and scenes from epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana.

· Male dancers from nearby towns or the families of traditional artists are trained in Chhau dance.

· The Shehnai and Mohuri reed pipes are used to play folk and traditional music while the dance is done in an open space at night.

Centre Approves Digital Add Policy

· The Union government has approved a new policy allowing its advertising wing, the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), to undertake advertisement campaigns on social media, OTT platforms and other digital media.

· The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting approved the "Digital Advertisement Policy, 2023 to enable and empower the Central Bureau of Communication to undertake campaigns in the Digital Media Space.

· In response to the evolving media landscape, the policy marks a pivotal moment in CBC's mission to disseminate information and create awareness regarding various schemes, programs, and policies of the Government.

· The policy will enable CBC to empanel agencies and organisations in the OTT and Video on Demand Space.

· CBC will also be able to leverage the growing number of listeners to Podcasts and Digital Audio platforms through empanelment of Digital Audio platforms.

· Apart from rationalising its process of empaneling Internet Websites, CBC now for the first time will be able to channelize its public service campaign messages through Mobile Applications too.

‘AAINA Dashboard For Cities’ Portal Launched

· The ‘AAINA Dashboard for Cities’ portal www.aaina.gov.in has been made live by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) where Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

· The country can participate in this pioneering initiative to voluntarily submit their key data on a regular basis, through a simple, easy-to-fill, data entry form on the portal.

· The primary objectives of the AAINA Dashboard are to help cities to (i) see how they are faring vis-à-vis other cities, (ii) inspire them by pointing to possibilities and areas of improvement and (iii) providing opportunity to learn and engage with frontrunners.

· While not ranking the ULBs, the AAINA dashboard would serve as a tool for comparing similarly placed cities and promoting peer learning among cities.

· The Dashboard will present the data submitted by the ULBs on the basis of indicators across five broad pillars namely, (i) Political & Administrative Structure, (ii) Finance, (iii) Planning, (iv) Citizen Centric Governance and (v) Delivery of Basic Services.

· The ULBs will submit their data, including audited accounts, and self-reported performance metrics by logging in to the dashboard’s portal.

· With the active cooperation of all ULBs, the ‘AAINA Dashboard for Cities’ aims to create a robust database of the key performance metrics of Urban Local Bodies, which could be accessed by all stakeholders, and subsequently would open for public view once it gets populated.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

APEDA Facilitates Shipment of Fresh Bananas to Netherlands

· In a significant boost to the prospects of fresh fruit exports, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) has facilitated the export of the first trial shipment of fresh bananas to the Netherlands via a sea route.

· The trial shipment of bananas to Europe was carried out by the APEDA-registered 'INI Farms - a top exporter of fruits and vegetables from India.

· Despite being the world's largest banana producer, India's export share is currently only one percent in the global market.

· In the fiscal year 2022-23, India exported bananas worth $176 million, equivalent to 0.36 MMT.

· Andhra Pradesh is the largest banana-producing state in India, followed by Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh.

BANKING

DFC commits Funding for Adani Group’s Port Terminal Project

· The United States International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) has committed $553 million (around Rs 4,600 crore) for the development of the Adani Group's deepwater shipping container terminal in the Port of Colombo, Sri Lanka.

· The West Container Terminal in the Port of Colombo is being developed by a consortium comprising Adani Ports and SEZ, John Keells Holdings, and the Sri Lanka Ports Authority.

· Adani Ports holds a 51% stake in the container terminal of the port, which also has a terminal run by China Merchants Port Holdings Co Ltd.

· China Merchants Holdings Co Ltd and Sri Lanka Ports Authority are jointly developing Colombo’s South Container Terminal, the first terminal under expansion in the Colombo port.

· The Port of Colombo is the largest and busiest transshipment port in the Indian Ocean and has been operating at over 90% utilisation since 2021, signalling its need for capacity expansion.

AWARDS & PRIZES

World Economic Forum's Smarter Climate Farmers Challenge

· Dvara E-Registry has been adjudged as one of the winners of the ‘Smarter Climate Farmers Challenge’, organised by UpLink, the open innovation platform of the World Economic Forum.

· The Smarter Climate Farmers Challenge’ by UpLink was initiated to combat the pressing agricultural challenges of the time, seeking innovative solutions in the realms of knowledge enhancement, resource efficiency and sustainability, inclusive technology and innovative financing.

· Dvara E-Registry is an ag-fintech start-up building a digital platform to improve access to agricultural services, both financial and advisory, for all stakeholders in the agri value chain.

· Dvara E-Registry was recently named the Dun and Bradstreet Start-Up 50 Trailblazer 2023.

· Tharakeswar Ganta, Co-Founder and Head of Financial Products at Dvara E-Registry.

DEFENCE

Russia Agrees to Supply Igla Anti-Aircraft Missiles to India

· Russia has signed a deal to supply Igla-S hand-held anti-aircraft missiles to India.

· As part of the deal, Russia will also allow production of the Igla in India under licence.

· Igla-S is a man-portable air defence system (MANPADS) designed to be fired by an individual or crew to target and bring down enemy aircraft.

· As per the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Russia accounted for 45% of India's arms imports between 2018 and 2022.

· India and Russia also began producing AK-203 Kalashnikov assault rifles together at the beginning of the year.

Joint Exercise 'Trishakti Prahar'

· The much-anticipated joint military exercise 'Trishakti Prahar' has commenced near the western border of Rajasthan in Jaisalmer.

· It is a joint military exercise involving the Indian Army, the Indian Navy, and the Indian Air Force (IAF).

· It aims to enhance mutual coordination and operational efficiency.

· It seeks to create new strategies and assess operational capabilities in the context of modern warfare.

· During the exercise, all three wings of the Indian Army actively engage in live practice sessions, simulating real war scenarios with complete coordination.

· The exercise includes long-range attacks by reconnaissance aircraft, emphasizing precision and high-volume attacks to neutralize hypothetical adversaries.

· It involves a diverse array of military assets, including various types of howitzers, helicopters, and weaponry. This encompasses the deployment of the Army's T-90s and Arjun main battle tanks.

· A major highlight of the exercise is the demonstration of the operational capability and readiness of the Pune-based Southwestern Command of the Indian Air Force.

Indian Navy's 4th Anti-Submarine Warfare Craft Launched

· The Indian Navy launched Amini, the most sophisticated and cutting-edge shallow watercraft for anti-submarine warfare.

· The fourth of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC) projects is called "Amini."

· Chief of Materiel Vice Admiral Sandeep Naithani conducted the launch ceremony.

· Amini was constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) constructs for the Indian Navy.

· The name 'Amini' refers to the strategic maritime importance of the island of Amini in Lakshadweep, which is located roughly 400 km west of Kochi.

· The 77m long ASW SWC ships have a displacement of 900 tonnes, a top speed of 25 knots, and an endurance of around 1800 nautical miles.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

AI-Powered Chatbot 'BIRBAL' to Enhance 'Ease of Living'

· Chandigarh Smart City Limited (CSCL) has launched an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven interactive chatbot named ‘BIRBAL’ to enhance citizen-centric services.

· The objective is to provide efficient and user-friendly citizen services within the local civic body.

· 'BIRBAL' is equipped to address a wide range of issues, including complaint management, citizen services, public transport services, online payment services, certificates/forms, health-related queries, MC budget inquiries, property details, and fire safety certificate requests.

· With the new chatbot citizens can interact with ‘BIRBAL’ using keywords, predefined questions, and voice commands.

· The AI chatbot incorporates various features such as voice assistance, live agent support, and AI-based response updates to ensure a seamless user experience.

· The development of 'BIRBAL' aligns with the government's commitment towards 'ease of living' by leveraging innovative technology solutions.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Students Day

· International Students’ Day, is celebrated on November 17.

· It is celebrated to remember the courage of student activists during the 1939 Nazi attack at the University of Prague.

· The first observance took place in 1941 at the International Students’ Council in London.

· It was there that students decided to introduce International Students’ Day, to be observed every November 17.

National Epilepsy Day

· National Epilepsy Day 2023 is observed on 17 November 2023.

· National Epilepsy Day was first observed by the Epilepsy Foundation of India to reduce Epilepsy conditions in India.

· Epilepsy Foundation in India is a non-profitable charity Organisation.

· Epilepsy Foundation of India was formed by Dr Nirmal Surya located in Mumbai.

· The Charity helps a lot of people who are suffering from Epilepsy and they are conducting awareness programs to reduce the fear of Epilepsy among people.

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