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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 19-08-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

DMRC Unveils CarbonLite Metro Travel Initiative

- The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) unveiled a pioneering initiative called CarbonLite Metro Travel to educate passengers about their significant contribution towards reducing carbon emissions by choosing metro trains.
- It is a new initiative of the DMRC to help people understand their contribution to reducing CO2 emissions by opting for metro rail services.
- With this initiative, daily commuters will now be able to understand and learn about the average amount of Carbon Dioxide (CO2) emissions they are decreasing with their simple step of selecting the metro as their means of transportation.
- The amount of CO2 will be calculated based on a comparison to road-based motor vehicles.
- It also aims to persuade commuters to choose an environmentally friendly method of transportation over motorised alternatives, thereby supporting a cleaner and more ecologically balanced environment.
- The initiative is in line with the Government of India's Mission Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE).

G20 Film Festival to Begin in New Delhi

- The G20 Film Festival will begin in New Delhi, on August 16.
- Satyajit Ray's "Pather Panchali" will be the opening film.
- The festival aims to celebrate and showcase a vibrant and collaborative partnership existing amongst the G20 and invited countries in the field of cinema.
- The festival is organised by the India International Centre (IIC) and the G20 Secretariat of the Ministry of External Affairs.
- It will be inaugurated by veteran actor Victor Banerjee and India's G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kan
- The event will continue till 2nd September.

PM Vishwakarma Scheme to Support Traditional Artisans and Craftspeople

- The Government has approved PM Vishwakarma's scheme to support traditional artisans and craftspeople of rural and urban India with a financial outlay of 13 thousand crore rupees.
- Briefing reporters in New Delhi after the Union Cabinet meeting, Communications and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said, eighteen traditional trades will be covered in the first instance under the scheme.
- They include Carpenters, Boat makers, Sonar, Raj Mistry, Toymaker, Lohar, and potters.
- He said the scheme will provide skill upgradation, Toolkit incentive, incentive for digital

transactions, and marketing support.
- Mr Vaishnaw said, under this scheme, loans up to one lakh rupees will be provided at a concessional interest rate of five per cent.
- The Minister said, more than 30 lakh families will be benefited from this scheme.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India Signs MoU with Trinidad and Tobago

- India and Trinidad and Tobago have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on sharing INDIA STACK — a collection of open APIs and digital public goods that aim to facilitate identity, data, and payment services on a large scale.
- Both sides agreed to cooperate in the areas of digital transformation using capacity building, training programmes, exchange of best practices, exchange of public officials and experts, development of pilot or demo solutions, etc.
- This collaboration comes after Union Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Electronics & IT, Shri Rajeev Chandrasekhar met with Trinidad and Tobago's Minister of Digital Transformation, Senator Mr Hassel Bacchus.
- During the meeting, they discussed cooperation in the fields of IT, emerging technologies, and the India stack.
- The MoU was signed in the presence of officials from the Ministry of Electronics and IT, the National E-Governance Division, MeitY and also from the Ministry of External Affairs.
- Since June 2023, India has already signed MoUs with countries namely Armenia, Sierra Leone, Suriname, and Antigua & Barbuda to share India Stack while many countries like Mauritius, and Saudi Arabia have shown interest and are at an advanced stage of finalizing cooperation on IndiaStack.
- A similar MoU was signed with Papua New Guinea also last month, showcasing the growing interest and acceptance of the initiative on a global scale.
- The UPI which is also a part of India Stack, has been accepted in France, UAE, Singapore and Sri Lanka.

BANKING

Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology

- A new technology developed by the Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT), an arm of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), is now all set to be deployed to increase last-mile connectivity of banking services in remote areas.
- The financial network technology, based on LoRa (Long Range) wireless protocol, has been successfully tested at the field level and is now being looked into by the RBI and other stakeholders.
- The new dedicated low-cost financial network based on LoRa protocol can be used privately by

banks to send encrypted financial packets to conduct financial transactions.
- Hyderabad-based IDRBT is the first in the world to develop this private financial network based on LoRa technology.
- It has protected the IP by filing a patent as well for offline transactions.
- The cost of the LoRa financial network is estimated to be 20% cheaper than alternative network technologies being used today.
- Banks can use LoRa as their own dedicated private network instead of using a third-party network, which is presently either wired (fibre) or through satellite links.

Project on Public Tech Platform for Frictionless Credit

- In a step towards enhancing India's financial landscape, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced the launch of the Pilot Project for Public Tech Platform for Frictionless Credit by Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the RBI.
- The aim is to enable delivery of frictionless credit by facilitating a seamless flow of required digital information to lenders.
- This framework encourages various stakeholders, including banks, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), FinTech firms, and startups, to collaboratively create and deliver solutions in the realms of payments, credit, and other financial services.
- The Public Tech Platform is poised to revolutionise credit delivery by streamlining the flow of critical digital information to lenders.
- Designed with an end-to-end digital infrastructure, the platform is founded upon an open architecture, making use of open Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and industry standards.
- The pilot phase of the platform will initially prioritise products such as Kisan Credit Card loans, Dairy Loans, collateral-free MSME loans, Personal loans, and home loans.

SPORTS

India's Mohit Kumar Becomes Under 20 World Champion

- Indian wrestler Mohit Kumar has become the Under 20 World Championship in men's 61 Kg Freestyle category at Amman City in Jordan.
- Mohit defeated Russia's Eldar Akhmadudinov by 9-8 in the final to become the fourth Indian Freestyle Wrestler to win a Junior World Championship.
- Mohit is the fourth male wrestler from India to earn a gold medal in the U20 World Championships, following Palwinder Cheema in 2001, Ramesh Kumar in 2001, and Deepak Punia in 2019.
- Jaideep won the 74kg bronze with a win over Kyrgyszstan's Zhakshylyk Ruslanovich Baitashov.
- Sagar Jaglan claimed a silver medal in Freestyle 79 kg category while Deepak Chahal won a bronze medal Freestyle 97 kg category on Day second of the event.
- The Indian men's freestyle team has so far won five medals.

ICC Men's T20I Player Rankings

- In the ICC Men's T20I Player Rankings released, star batter Suryakumar Yadav has retained the top spot while Shubman Gill has risen by 43 spots to reach the 25th rank.

- While Suryakumar tops the list with 907 points, way above Pakistan opener Mohammad Rizwan who is occupying the second spot with 811 points.
- Pakistan skipper Babar Azam is at the third spot with 756 points while South African cricketer Aiden Markram is at the fourth spot with 748 points.
- No other Indian batter is there in the top 10.

England All-Rounder Ben Stokes Reverses Retirement from ODI

- In cricket, England all-rounder Ben Stokes reversed his decision to retire from One Day Internationals ahead of the ICC ODI World Cup scheduled for October in India.
- Stokes will make his return to the 50-over squad for a series against New Zealand in September.
- Stokes last played an ODI for England on the 19 July 2022, against South Africa.
- In 105 ODIs, he has scored 2,924 runs at an average of 38.98 and a strike rate of above 95.
- He has three centuries and 21 fifties in 90 innings. He has also taken 74 wickets in the format.

DEFENCE

President Murmu to Launch Frigate 'Vindhyagiri' in Kolkata

- The Indian Navy will launch Vindhyagiri, named after a mountain range in Karnataka, at the hands of President Droupadi Murmu, at Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE), Kolkata, West Bengal (WB).
- Vindhyagiri is the 6th ship of the Project 17A Frigates.
- These warships are follow-ons of the Project 17 Class Frigates (Shivalik Class), with improved stealth features, advanced weapons and sensors and platform management systems.
- It is a technologically advanced Frigate and pays a fitting tribute to the distinguished service of its predecessor, the erstwhile INS Vindhyagiri, the Leander Class ASW Frigate.
- Under the Project 17A programme, 4 ships by Mumbai-based Mazagaon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and three by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Limited (GRSE) are under construction.
- The project's first 5 ships were launched by MDL and GRSE, between 2019-2022.
- These ships have been designed in-house by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau, the pioneer organisation for all warship design activities.
- As much as 75% of the orders for equipment and systems of Project 17A ships are from indigenous firms, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NASA Spacecraft Makes 1st Earth Flyby After a 17-Year Journey

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Solar Terrestrial Relations Observatory (STEREO-A) spacecraft made its first Earth flyby nearly 17 years after its launch.
- The pair of STEREO spacecrafts were launched on October 25, 2006, from Florida's Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.
- The two spacecraft were situated in the Sun's orbit, STEREO-A ("Ahead") and STEREO-B ("Behind").
- The dual-spacecraft mission accomplished its major goal by delivering the first-ever stereoscopic view of our star.
- On February 2011, another significant milestone was achieved as both STEREO-A and -B reached a remarkable 180-degree separation in their orbits, which gave us the full sphere image of the Sun.
- STEREO-A will synthesize its views with those from Nasa's and the European Space Agency's Solar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO) and Nasa's Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO).

OBITUARY

Sulabh International Founder Bindeshwar Pathak

- Social worker Bindeshwar Pathak, the founder of Sulabh International and a pioneer in building public toilets Passed away at the age of 80 in New Delhi, Delhi.
- He first came to understand the plight of scavengers in 1968 when he joined the Bhangi-Mukti (scavengers' liberation) Cell of the Bihar Gandhi Centenary Celebrations Committee.
- In 1970, he founded Sulabh International, a non-profit organisation that has carried out extensive work on the conversion of dry latrines into modern toilets in over 17,00 towns, and has helped build over 160,835 toilets.
- He was the Brand Ambassador for Swachh Rail Mission of Indian Railways.
- He authored several books, the best known of which is The Road to Freedom, and was a frequent participant in conferences on sanitation.
- In 1991, Pathak was awarded the Padma Bhushan for his work for liberating and rehabilitating manual scavengers.
- In 2009, he received the Stockholm Water Prize.
- He was presented with the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award for Excellence in Public Administration, Academics and Management for the year 2017.

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