DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 20-06-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

Centre Discontinues Sale of Rice, Wheat Under OMSS Scheme

- The central government has discontinued the sale of rice and wheat from the central pool under the Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) to state governments.
- This decision will affect some states, including Karnataka, that provide free grains to the poor through their own schemes.
- The Food Corporation of India (FCI) has issued an order stating that the sale of wheat and rice under the OMSS for state governments is discontinued.
- However, the sale of rice under the OMSS will continue for northeastern states, hilly states, and states facing law and order situations or natural calamities at the existing rate of Rs 3,400 per quintal.
- FCI may sell rice under the OMSS to private parties from the central pool stock to moderate market prices.
- The central government had previously allowed states to buy rice and wheat from the FCI for their own schemes without participating in e-auctions as part of the OMSS policy for 2023.

First Solar Rooftop Project at IIT Jodhpur

- NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Ltd (NVVN) commissioned its first rooftop solar PV project at IIT Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
- The 1 MW grid-connected solar project has been implemented by NVVN under the RESCO (Renewable Energy Service Company) model.
- The Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) duration for the project is 25 years.
- NVVN, an arm of state-run power producer NTPC, is responsible for the project implementation.

- The rooftop solar project is installed on the roofs of 14 buildings within the IIT Jodhpur campus.
- The project is expected to generate around 14.9 lakh units of electricity annually, meeting 15% of IIT Jodhpur's electricity requirement.
- The rooftop project will contribute to a reduction of 1,060 tonnes of CO_2 emissions per year.

App Called 'Arunpol App' of Arunachal Pradesh Police

- Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu launched the 'Arunpol App' of Arunachal Pradesh Police.
- This app allows common people to register complaints without visiting the police station.
- The app also enables people to apply for clearance from the police.
- An APP Awareness Generation Vehicle named Arunpol Sewa Van was flagged off during the event.
- The vehicle will travel to various places, engage with the public and create awareness about the Arunpol App.
- The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh also launched the e-vigilance app for the state government employees.
- The e-Vigilance app ensures timely vigilance clearance for government employees.

BANKING

India’s First-Ever Nifty Microcap 250 Index Fund

- Motilal Oswal Asset Management Company (MOAMC) has launched Motilal Oswal Nifty Microcap 250 Index Fund, India’s only passive fund offering exposure to microcap stocks.

- It is to provide investors an opportunity to participate in the growth potential of microcap stocks.

- The New Fund Offer (NFO) period commences on 15th June and closes on 29th June 2023.

- Motilal Oswal Nifty Microcap 250 Index Fund is an open-ended fund replicating/tracking the total returns of the Nifty Microcap 250 Index.

- The minimum application amount for Motilal Oswal Nifty Microcap 250 Index Fund is ₹500 and in multiples of Re 1
- The scheme’s investment objective is to provide returns that, before expenses, correspond to the total returns of the securities as represented by the Nifty Microcap 250 Index, subject to tracking error.
- However, there is no guarantee or assurance that the AMC will achieve the scheme’s investment objective.
- The Nifty Microcap 250 Index is designed to measure the performance of the top 250 companies excluding those already present in the Nifty 500 constituents.

- The index is well-diversified, with its top 10 holdings accounting for only 11% as against 59% in the Nifty 50 Index.
- Further, it provides diversified exposure to sectors like Industrials, Consumer Discretionary, Commodities, and Healthcare that are usually underweight in broad-based market indices.

Phonepe Launches Payment Gateway

- Indian digital payments and financial services company, PhonePe officially launched the PhonePe Payment Gateway with a special limited-period offer for new Micro Small & Medium Enterprise (MSME) merchants.

- This is in contrast to most payment gateways that charge a standard transaction fee of 2%.

- PhonePe Payment Gateway has given the fintech unicorn startup, PhonePe an entry to the club of other payment gateways in India such as Paytm, Cashfree, Instamojo, CC Avenue, Bill Desk, Razorpay, etc.

- The free services could help merchants who have a monthly sales volume of Rs 1 crore – save up to Rs 8 lakhs and potentially around Rs 2 lakh per month with zero onboarding costs.

- It offers a no-code setup for integration across all platforms and helps merchants accept online payments across Android, iOS, mobile web, and desktop.

SPORTS

Senior Football Championship

- The Indian men's senior football team emerged victorious in the Intercontinental Cup by defeating Lebanon 2-0in the final held at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneshwar.
- The first half of the match ended without any goals being scored.
- In the second half, the Indian team took the lead with a goal from their captain, Sunil Chhetri, in the 46th minute, making it 1-0.
- Lallianzuala Chhangte extended the lead with a goal in the 65th minute, resulting in a final score of 2-0 in favor of India.
- This victory marks India's second title in the Intercontinental Cup, with their first win occurring during theinaugural edition in 2018.

Mascot for Upcoming 37th National Games

- Chief Minister of Goa Dr Pramod Sawant launched the mascot for the upcoming 37th National Games.
- The ceremony took place at the Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Stadium in Taleigao and was organized by the Directorate of Sports and Youth Affairs and the Sports Authority of Goa.
- The launch event coincided with the celebration of Goa Revolution Day.

- The objective of the National Games is to identify sporting talents who are capable of representing the country at the Olympics.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Gandhi Peace Prize for 2021

- Gita Press, Gorakhpur, will be awarded the Gandhi Peace Prize for 2021 in recognition of its exceptional contribution to social, economic, and political transformation through non-violent and Gandhian methods.
- PM Modi highlighted Gita Press's efforts in promoting Gandhian ideals of peace and social harmony, emphasizing that the award signifies recognition of their community service after a century of establishment.
- The Gandhi Peace Prize, instituted in 1995 on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's 125th birth anniversary, is an annual award that pays tribute to Gandhi's ideals.
- The award is open to individuals irrespective of nationality, race, language, caste, creed, or gender.
- The prize includes a monetary amount of ₹1 crore, a citation, a plaque, and an exquisite traditional handicraft/handloom item.

APPOINMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

New Chief of Research and Analysis Wing

- Ravi Sinha, a 1988 batch IPS officer of the Chhattisgarh cadre, has been selected as the next chief of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).
- Sinha will take over from current chief Samant Kumar Goel, whose term ends on June 30, 2023.
- Presently, Ravi Sinha is holding the post of Special Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat.
- It is the foreign intelligence agency of India.
- RAW's primary function is to gather foreign intelligence.
- It is responsible for counter-terrorism and counter-proliferation efforts.

DEFENCE

UAV MQ-9 Predator Drones from US

- India’s defence ministry approved the acquisition of 31 MQ-9B armed drones from the US.
- The Defense Acquisition Council (DAC) has approved the purchase of armed Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) at a cost of over $3 billion.
- The UAVs will be procured from General Atomics Aeronautical Systems (GA-ASI), a United States-based aeronautical company.
- The Predator UAV, produced by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems Inc. (GA-ASI), is commonly referred to as the MQ-9.
- The MQ-9 has an impressive endurance, capable of flying for over 27 hours without refueling.
- It can reach speeds of up to 240 KTAS (Knots True Airspeed).
- The UAV is designed to operate at high altitudes, with a maximum operating ceiling of 50,000 feet.
- It possesses a substantial payload capacity, allowing it to carry up to 3,850 pounds (1,746 kilograms) of equipment, sensors, or other mission-specific payloads.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Sickle Cell Awareness Day

- World Sickle Cell Awareness Day is observed every year on 19 June.
- The day is celebrated to raise awareness of the impact of sickle cell disease (SCD) on individuals, families and communities around the world.
- It aims to raise awareness about sickle cell disease (SCD).
- Sickle cell disease is a genetic blood disorder and is characterised by abnormal red blood cells

that take on a crescent or sickle shape.

- Irregularly shaped cells can cause blockage in the blood vessels and this leads to various health complications.
- This disease affects individuals, families and communities around the world.
- This can result in organ damage, anaemia and increased susceptibility to infection.
- It originated from a resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly on 22 December 2008.

International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict

- The International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict is observed every year on 19 June.
- Its main goal is to raise awareness and end sexual violence in conflict situations.
- The theme for 2023 is 'Bridging the gender digital divide to prevent, address and respond to conflict-related sexual violence.'
- The day focuses on the prevalence and consequences of sexual violence in conflict zones.
- The primary goal of the United Nations is to adapt to an ever-changing world and to promote international cooperation among nations.

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