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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 21-03-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

India's First PPP Green Waste Processing Plant to Be Set up in Indore

India's cleanest city Indore in Madhya Pradesh has launched India's first public-private partnership (PPP) model-based green waste processing plant under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban.

The project will process green waste in the municipal area of the city into valuable resources and help the city to achieve garbage-free status.

The second phase of the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban launched on 1st October 2021 aims to achieve "Garbage Free" status for all cities of the country by 2026.

The green waste processing plant is being set up by the Indore Municipal Corporation in partnership with Astronomical Industries Private Limited.

The Municipal Corporation will allocate the land for the facility and transport the green waste to the facility.

The private sector will be responsible for constructing and managing the waste processing facility.

The green waste plant will give a boost to the circular economy and provide an alternative option to substitute the use of non-biodegradable materials.

C-DOT Launches Samarth Incubation Programme

The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DoT) has launched an incubation programme for the Startups "Samarth" to boost innovation and indigenous research in the field of telecommunications and Information Technology (IT) sectors.

Startups registered with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry are eligible for the Samarth Incubation Programme.

The chosen startups will get a grant of up to Rs 5 lakh, and gain access to well-furnished office space for a period of 6 months at the C-DOT Campus in the country.

They will also have access to C-DOT Lab facilities and will be mentored by C-DOT technical leaders and industry experts.

The startup will also get an opportunity for future collaboration under the C-DOT Collaborative Research Program if they are selected.

The C-DOT will implement the Samarth Incubation Programme through the selected Software Technology Parks of India (STPI).

UIDAI Partners with Sarvam AI to Enhance Aadhaar Services with AI

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has partnered with Bengaluru-based Sarvam AI, an indigenous Generative AI (GenAI) company, to enhance the user experience of Aadhaar services.

This collaboration introduces AI-powered voice interactions, real-time fraud detection, and multilingual support to make Aadhaar services more accessible, secure, and efficient.

This one-year agreement, extendable by another year, reflects UIDAI's commitment to technological advancements and user-centric innovations.

It improves Aadhaar service accessibility, security, and user experience using AI.

It enables real-time user feedback for Aadhaar services.

It detects overcharging during enrollment and updates.

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy Launches 'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam'

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy launched the 'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam' scheme on the Assembly premises.

The scheme provides self-employment loans to SC, ST, BC, and Minority

The scheme aims to create self-employment opportunities for five lakh unemployed youth across Telangana.

The government has allocated ₹6,000 crore for the initiative.

Eligible beneficiaries can receive up to ₹3 lakh to establish self-employment units.

Application scrutiny begins next month, and loan sanction documents will be issued on June 2nd (Telangana Formation Day)Loans up to ₹1 lakh will receive an 80% subsidy, Loans up to ₹2 lakh will receive a 70% subsidy and Loans up to ₹3 lakh will receive a 60% subsidy.

DEFENCE

Indo-French Varuna Naval Exercise 2025

The Indian Navy and the French Navy will carry out the 23rd edition of their bilateral naval exercise, VARUNA, from March 19 to 22, 2025

The exercise has been an important part of India-France maritime cooperation since it began in 2001 and reflects the strong naval partnership between the two countries.

According to an official press release, VARUNA 2025 will focus on improving coordination and cooperation between the two navies.

The exercise will include various drills and manoeuvres involving underwater, surface, and air operations.

Key warships and aircraft from both navies will take part, including India's aircraft carrier INS Vikrant and France's aircraft carrier FS Charles de Gaulle.

Other participants include fighter aircraft, destroyers, frigates, and an Indian Scorpene-class submarine.

The exercise will feature advanced air defence drills and fighter jet exercises, including mock air combat between India's MiG-29K and France's Rafale-M jets.

Anti-submarine warfare drills will focus on strengthening underwater surveillance, while surface warfare operations will involve coordinated movements and engagements by ships from both navies.

Maritime patrol aircraft will assist in improving situational awareness, and replenishment-at-sea exercises will boost logistical cooperation.

BANKING

Asian Development Bank Launches 'Frontier Seed'

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has launched the Frontier Seed (Pacific) program to strengthen private sector growth and economic resilience in the Pacific region.

The initiative aims to develop local capital markets, support sustainable businesses, and promote inclusive economies.

Initial commitment of $4 million, backed by ORCA Trust Fund, Nordic Development Fund, and UK Foreign, Commonwealth ∧ Development Office (FCDO).

SeaPAC Pte Ltd (Fiji): Received $200,000 technical assistance to boost prawn production and improve food security.

Kahuto Pacific: Received $200,000 technical assistance to enhance aerial mapping services and improve coastal data availability.

CUB Ties Up With Sunrisers Hyderabad As Exclusive Banking Partner

City Union Bank (CUB) has partnered with Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) to launch a co-branded credit card.

The bank will offer customized savings accounts and loans.

Special co-branded credit cards will be available for SRH supporters.

Cardholders will receive special rewards and discounts on SRH merchandise.

Access to exclusive fan experiences will be provided.

Offers on SRH memorabilia, including jerseys, caps, and other merchandise, will be available.

Seamless mobile banking and contactless payment options will be introduced.

Instant access to SRH promotions through CUB's online platforms will be offered.

CUB will have a strong presence on SRH match days.

Digital and on-ground activations will engage fans.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Ramnath Goenka Award in Journalism 2025

Mridulika Jha of Aaj Tak won the Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism 2025 for her coverage of the ‘‘Dunki route’ adopted by the youths of Haryana to illegally enter the United States of America.

27 journalists were felicitated in 20 categories at the 19th Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism 2025 in a function held in New Delhi on 19 March 2025.

Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism was instituted by the Indian Express Group on the birth centenary anniversary of its founder Ramnath Goenka. The award is administered by the Ramnath Goenka Foundation.

The award was first given in 2005 and it honours Print/Digital and Broadcast journalists in India in various categories for their courage and excellence in journalism despite facing considerable political and economic pressures.

President Droupadi Murmu was the chief guest of the 19th Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism 2025. She gave awards to the winners of the 19th edition of the award.

The winners were presented with a citation, a Trophy, and a cash prize of Rs one lakh.

SPORTS

England to Host Kabaddi World Cup 2025

For the first time in history, the Kabaddi World Cup 2025 is being hosted outside Asia, with England set to stage the tournament.

The competition begins this evening, and the Indian men's team will open their campaign against Italy in Wolverhampton, West Midlands.

This is the second edition of the Kabaddi World Cup organized by World Kabaddi.

The first edition (2019) was held in Malaysia, where India won both the men's and women's tournaments.

This tournament is different from the International Kabaddi Federation (IKF) Kabaddi World Cup, which has been exclusively hosted in India.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ayushmann Khurrana Named 'Fit India Icon' by Union Sports Minister

Renowned Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana has been officially designated as the 'Fit India Icon' by Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.

The announcement was made during the inaugural ceremony of the Fit India Movement in New Delhi.

With this recognition, the 40-year-old actor has joined hands with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Fit India Movement, an initiative that aims to inspire citizens to prioritize their health and well-being.

The Fit India Movement is a nationwide fitness campaign launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 29, 2019.

Objectives of the Fit India Movement are encouraging people to adopt a healthier lifestyle and promoting simple and fun ways to incorporate physical activity into daily routines.

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