DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 22-12-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

PMBJP Achieved Their Target of Rs. 1000 Crore in Sales in FY 2023-24

Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) has created another landmark in the history of generic medicines in the country by selling medicines worth Rs. 1000 Crore this year.

This achievement was made possible only by the people of the country, who have saved approximately 5000 crores by purchasing medicines from Jan Aushadhi Kendras which is present in more than 785 districts of the country.

This substantial growth is a testament to PMBI's commitment to serving more communities and reaching a broader audience.

Hon'ble Prime Minister in his Independence Day speech, 2023 has announced the opening of 25,000 Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Kendras (PMBJKs) across the country.

Accordingly, the Government has set a target to open 25,000 Janaushadhi Kendras across the country by March, 2026.

Kiren Rijiju Launches India's Maiden Winter Scientific Arctic Expedition

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju flagged off India's first-ever winter science expedition to the Arctic region.

India's first-ever winter science expedition to the Arctic region has been flagged off by the Earth Sciences Minister Kiren Rijiju.

Indian scientific expeditions to the Arctic during the winter will allow researchers to conduct unique scientific observations during polar nights, where there is no sunlight for nearly 24 hours and sub-zero temperatures.

A team of four scientists started the journey to India's research station in the NyAlesund town on the Brogger peninsula.

Athulya R, Girish B S, Prashant Rawat, and Surendra Singh are the members of this team.

The first batch of the maiden Arctic winter expedition comprises researchers from the host NCPOR, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Mandi; Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune;

and Raman Research Institute, Bengaluru.

India's First Himalayan AirSafari

The Uttarakhand government is set to transform tourism by launching India's first-ever Himalayan AirSafari using gyrocopters, compact and agile aircraft.

The first trial flight of gyrocopters was successfully conducted at Bairagi Camp, Haridwar, marking a significant milestone in the initiative.

The Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board is collaborating with Rajas Aerosports and Adventures Pvt Ltd to introduce gyrocopters as an innovative way for tourists to explore the state's picturesque landscapes.

Germany-supplied state-of-the-art gyrocopters have been procured for the Himalayan Air Safari initiative.

Initial operations will be led by expertly trained German pilots.

The gyrocopters will smoothly transition between exotic locations.

BANKING

Government of India and Asian Development Bank

The Government of India (GoI) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed an agreement for a 37 billion Japanese Yen ($250 million) loan that will continue financing the construction of the 82-kilometre Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) corridor.

The Delhi-Meerut RRTS corridor will feature multi-modal hubs to facilitate smooth interchange with other modes of transportation.

The first tranche of the ADB loan amounts to $500 million, with an additional $500 million co-financed by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

The investment project is expected to enhance urban mobility through the development of the RRTS, contributing to economic growth.

The benefits are projected to extend to women and differently-abled individuals.

This is anticipated to create economic and employment opportunities by significantly reducing travel time from 3-4 hours to about 1 hour.

IRDAI Relaxes Claim Settlement Rules- Cyclone Michaung Victims

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has raised the limits on losses for the appointment of Surveyors and Loss Assessors.

The limits have been increased for Motor Insurance to Rs 1 lakh from the existing Rs 50,000.

For other than motor insurance, it has been increased from the current Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.

A surveyor and loss assessor is an insurance intermediary licensed by IRDAI to investigate, manage, quantify, validate and deal with losses (whether insured or not) arising from any contingency, on behalf of the company or the policyholder.

The regulatory changes are specifically applicable to claims arising from Cyclone Michaung and the associated heavy rains/floods.

The special dispensation is effective for a period of 2 months from the date of the circular's issuance.

Cyclone Michuang intensified into a severe cyclone after forming in the Bay of Bengal during the 2023 North Indian Ocean cyclone season.

Several areas in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh reeled under water logging conditions due to heavy rainfall in the region caused by Cyclone Michaung's landfall.

Cashfree Payments Introduces 'FlowWise’

Cashfree Payments, India's leading payments and API banking company, announced the launch of 'FlowWise' that helps Indian businesses manage payments more efficiently.

The newly introduced platform will allow businesses to easily use multiple payment services with just one setup and direct payments to different partners based on specific needs in real-time.

With FlowWise, Cashfree Payments has introduced an innovative and industry-first concept of 'self-hosted payments orchestration', allowing payment management to take place directly on the merchant's infrastructure.

It is India's first cloud-native orchestration platform and aims to improve success rate by up to 10% and cut the processing costs up to 40%.

FlowWise's self hosting feature eliminates safety concerns, making it one of the most secure, scalable and cost effective solutions for merchants.

SPORTS

National Sports Awards 2023

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports announced the National Sports Awards 2023 on 20 December 2023.

The winners for the National Sports Awards 2023 were selected by the selection committee headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice A.M. Khanwilkar.

Badminton players Chirag C Shetty and Satwik Sai Raj Rankireddy will be honoured with the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award.

Twenty-six sportspersons will receive the Arjuna Awards.

Golf coach Jaskirat Singh Grewal, Kabaddi coach Bhaskaran E and Table Tennis player Jayanta Kumar Pushilal will be honoured with the Dronacharya Award in the lifetime category.

Dhyan Chand Award for Lifetime Achievement in Sports and Games, will be given to Manjusha Kanwar for Badminton, Vineet Kumar Sharma for Hockey and Kavitha Selvaraj for Kabaddi.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy 2023 will be presented to Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

Food Adulteration Cases: NCRB Report

According to the data released by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Hyderabad is in first position in India regarding food adulteration cases.

In cases of food adulteration, Andhra Pradesh stood next to Telangana.

The seized items include adulterated finger garlic paste, ice creams, and tea powder.

A total of 291 cases of food adulteration were reported across 19 major cities in India in 2021.

Food adulteration is a critical concern for the health of the Public.

The contaminated food items can cause severe health problems, including foodborne illnesses, and allergies.

The NCRB data shows that there is an urgent need to take strict measures to combat food adulteration.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Indian Armed Forces Officers Awarded ‘Golden Owl’

Indian Armed Forces officers have been awarded the 'Golden Owl' for their outstanding performance.

The officers were undergoing the Command and Staff Course at the Defence Services Command and Staff College (DSCSC) in Sri Lanka.

The DSCSC course is designed to prepare senior officers for leadership roles in joint operations and higher command.

The award was given to Wing Commander Sumeet Mahajan, Major Rohit and Lieutenant Commander Sunny Sharma by Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe.

The “Golden Owl” award admires strategic thinking, analytical skills and potential for future leadership.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Reuven Azar as New Ambassador to India

The Israeli government approved the appointment of Reuven Azar as the new Ambassador to India.

Azar will also concurrently serve as the non-resident Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

Azar was born in Argentina and has a diverse and extensive background in various diplomatic roles.

In an earlier stint in Washington from 2003 to 2006, he served as Counsellor for Political Affairs.

From 2014 to 2018, Mr. Azar was Deputy Ambassador at the Embassy of Israel in Washington, DC.

Azar is currently serving as the Ambassador of Israel to Romania.

India’s Uma Sekhar gets Elected to Governing Council of UNIDROIT

India’s first woman candidate, Ms. Uma Sekhar secured a remarkable victory by garnering 45 out of 59 votes in the initial round of elections for the Governing Council of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT) held in Rome, Italy.

With this, India will be a member of the Governing Council for the period from 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2028.

In the election, there were 32 contestants in the fray including those from the USA, China, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, France, and others.

DEFENCE

Indian Air Force Conducts Successful Test of 'SAMAR'

Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully conducted the test of the 'SAMAR' standing for Surface to Air Missile for Assured Retaliation, air defence missile system during 'Exercise Astrashakti-2023.'

Exercise Astrashakti-2023 took place at Suryalanka Air Force Station in Andhra Pradesh.

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