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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 23-08-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

660 MW Super Thermal Power Project in Barh, Bihar

- The Union Minister for Power and New and Renewable Energy Shri R. K. Singh will dedicate to the nation a 660 MW unit of NTPC's Barh Super Thermal Power Project in Barh, Bihar.
- The 660 MW unit being inaugurated is Unit 2 of Stage I of the project.
- The commissioning of this unit would be another milestone in the government's endeavour to provide reliable and affordable power to the nation.
- As part of the project, 220 kV GIS will be constructed in existing sub-station premises along with the installation of 2 transformers of 500 MVA capacity.
- The extension of the substation at Lakhisarai will lead to improved power availability in Lakhisarai, Sheikhpura, Munger and Jamui districts and will also ease the supply of power to meet future energy demand.
- The installation of state-of-the-art GIS technology of 220 kV voltage level in the Lakhisarai sub-station will further strengthen the connectivity of the region to the national grid.
- The provision of an uninterrupted power supply will also lead to the industrial and commercial development of the region.

Ministry of Tourism to Organize Food Festival in New Delhi

- Ministry of Tourism in association with the different State Governments / UTs is organizing the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat Food Festival in the capital.
- The festival aims to celebrate the rich culinary diversity of India.
- The event will showcase state-specific cuisines and promote awareness of the unique offerings within each region while fostering a sense of togetherness.

- The Food Festival is being held with the enthusiastic participation of 23 States and UTs.
- The festival will be organised in State Sadans/Bhawans of the participating States in New Delhi.
- This initiative aligns with the larger goal of promoting domestic tourism and fostering a sense of pride in one's heritage.
- The Food Festival is not only a celebration of India's rich culture and heritage but also to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and to promote the spirit of Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat.

BANKING

ADB Approves USD 40.5 Million Loan to Meghalaya

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 40.5 million loan for integrated early childhood development (ECD) and maternal mental health in Meghalaya.
- The Meghalaya government is also contributing USD 15.27 million to the project.
- A USD 2-million technical assistance grant from the Japan Fund for Prosperous and Resilient Asia and the Pacific will help develop guidelines and training curricula for AWC staff and ECD educators.
- The project aims to strengthen childcare for 2 age groups: 0-1.5 years (home-based) and 5-6 years (center-based through Anganwadi centers).
- Nurturing Care Access- The project focuses on improving access to nurturing care for children, fostering their holistic development.
- ADB's assistance includes the addition of eggs to the diet of pregnant and lactating women and children aged 5-6 years.

Canara Bank Launched Canara Jeevan Dhara

- Canara Bank has introduced a specialised savings bank account named 'Canara Jeevan Dhara'.
- It is aimed at catering to the unique financial needs of pensioners and prospective pensioners, including those who have retired on a voluntary basis or through normal retirement.

- The bank offers two variants depending on the pension credit.
- Diamonds account is for up to Rs 50,000 and Platinum account is for above Rs 50,000.
- The interest rate on Canara Jeevan Dhara savings account mirrors the regular savings account rate, ranging from 2.90% to 4% based on the account balance.
- The account offers a loan against deposit feature, providing senior citizens with an attractive rate of 0.75% above the deposit rate.
- Canara Jeevan Dhara customers enjoy a top-up facility on pension loans, enhancing their access to credit and financial flexibility.

SBI Plans to Open 300 Branches Across India

- The State Bank of India (SBI) plans to open 300 new branches across India in the current financial year.
- It currently operates 22,405 branches across the country and it has 235 foreign branches and offices.
- SBI aims to increase its network of business correspondents, which play a crucial role in extending banking services to underserved areas.
- In the first quarter of the current fiscal year, SBI reported its highest-ever quarterly profit at ₹16,884 crore.
- This is a substantial increase compared to the net profit of ₹6,068 crore in the same quarter of the previous year.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Maharashtra Government’s Inaugural ‘Udyog Ratna’ Award

- The Maharashtra Government’s inaugural ‘Udyog Ratna’ award was presented to veteran entrepreneur Padma Vibhushan Ratan Tata by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.
- ‘Udyog Ratna Award recognizes outstanding contributions in the industry sector.
- The award signifies Ratan Tata’s remarkable impact on both national and global industrial

sectors.

- The Tata Group’s diverse range of products, from salt to vehicles and aircraft, was highlighted as a symbol of trust and industrial excellence.

- The award included a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh, a badge, and a certificate of honour.

- The presentation took place at Ratan Tata’s home due to his health condition preventing him from attending the official award ceremony.

- Maharashtra Government introduced ‘Maharashtra Udyog Puraskar’ awards to honour contributors to the state’s industrial growth.
- Various categories of awards were announced, including Udyog Mitra Award, Udyogini Award, and Best Marathi Entrepreneur Award.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Whole-Time Members of SEBI

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has appointed two new full-time directors.
- The government has appointed Kamlesh Chandra Varshney and Amarjeet Singh as full-time members.
- Their appointment, according to the announcement, will be valid for three years from the date of assumption of taking responsibility or until future orders, whichever comes first.
- Varshney is currently a joint secretary at the Department of Revenue, and Singh is the SEBI executive director.
- SEBI now has two full-time members, Ashwani Bhatia and Ananth Narayan G, and four part-time members, Ajay Seth, Manoj Govil, M. Rajeshwar Rao, and Dr V. Ravi Anshuman.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

TDB-DST Partners with Chemlife Innovations

- The Technology Development Board (TDB), operating under the Department of Science and Technology (DST) partnered with M/s Chemlife Innovations Pvt. Ltd., headquartered in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- This collaboration marks a significant stride in advancing the project titled ‘Commercialization and Manufacturing of Bio-Trace Minerals Used in Feed for Animals’
- This collaboration aligns harmoniously with the National Livestock Mission—a cornerstone of India’s strategic framework.
- Guided by the Prime Minister’s vision, the mission aims to enhance livestock productivity, optimize feed and fodder resources and infuse technology into livestock management.

- Aligned with this national roadmap, TDB and M/s Chemlife Innovations Pvt. Ltd. embark on a transformative journey, marking a pivotal milestone in the “Commercialization and Manufacturing of Bio-Trace Minerals used in Feed for Animals” project.
- TDB’s unwavering support is evidenced by its commitment of ₹ 84 lacks, significantly contributing to the total project cost of ₹60 lakhs.

DEFENCE

World’s Highest Motorable Road in Eastern Ladakh

- Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has commenced the construction of the world’s highest motorable road, the Likaru-Migla-Fukche road close to Hanle in Eastern Ladakh.
- The 64-km long road will connect Likaru to Fukche which is situated three kilometres away from the LAC in Eastern Ladakh.
- The new highest motorable pass will set a new world record of being the motorable road at an altitude of 19,400 feet.
- Presently, the Umlingla pass at the height of 19,024 feet, is the world’s highest motorable pass, constructed by BRO in the year 2021.
- Umlingla Pass is a 52 km long road that connects Chishumle to Demchok, which is right on the LAC, and also a friction point between India and China.
- The proposed road between Likaru-Migla-Fukche will provide an axis connecting Hanle to CDFD road at Fukche.
- The strategically important road will pass through Migla, which is at 19400 feet.
- A budget of approximately Rs 520 crore has been slated for the ambitious project.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Kuwi and Desia Books at Bhubaneswar

- Union Education and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, and Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman launched Kuwi and Desia books at Bhubaneswar.

- The event also witnessed the special cover release on behalf of the Department of Posts, Ministry of Communications, Government of India.

- This marks a collaborative effort with the Central University of Odisha, Koraput, Department of Posts, and NCERT.

- The Ministers attended a series of events under the nationwide ‘Meri Maati Mera Desh’ campaign, on the call of the Prime Minister of the country, to pay homage to the heroes who sacrificed for the country.

- The Ministers visited Sand Art on ‘Meri Maati Mera Desh’ by Padmashri Awardee Sand Artist Shri Sudarshan Patnaik at Puri Beach.
- Shri Pradhan expressed that the artwork is a unique and admirable way to pay tribute to the ‘heroes’ who sacrificed their life for the country.

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