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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 24-04-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

'Digital Highways' in India by 2025

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is preparing to develop around 10,000 km of optic fiber cable (OFC) infrastructure across India by the financial year 2025.
- This move is aimed at providing internet connectivity to remote locations and expediting the roll-out of new-age telecom technologies like 5G and 6G.
- The NHAI's fully-owned special purpose vehicle, the National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML), will be implementing the network of digital highways by developing integrated utility corridors along the national highways to develop OFC infrastructure.
- The pilot routes for the 'digital highway' development have been identified as 1,367 kilometres on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway and 512 km on the Hyderabad-Bangalore corridor.
- The creation of a 'Digital Highway' will not only have a positive impact on the country's growth and development, but will also contribute to its digital transformation.

CSIR and OIL Sign MoU

- CSIR and Oil India Ltd. (OIL) signed an MoU to collaborate on research in advanced technologies for energy security.
- The objective of the MoU is to establish a formal framework for collaboration between OIL and CSIR laboratories and conduct research in advanced technologies for energy security.
- Both CSIR and OIL will work towards capacity building through training and skill development.
- OIL will consider providing CSR funding support to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, Aspirational Districts, Rural Development, Government Missions/Initiatives etc.

BANKING

AIIB to Open its First Overseas Office in Abu Dhabi

- The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) signed an agreement to set up its first overseas office in Abu Dhabi Global Market.
- The AIIB is a multilateral development bank that prioritises financing infrastructure projects focused on sustainability.
- The new foreign office in Abu Dhabi will support the AIIB's development agenda by funding sustainable economic development projects, primarily in areas where it is most needed.
- The strategic location of the office in the Middle East will enable AIIB to make a global impact in achieving its goals.

AWARDS & PRIZES

PM's Award for Excellence

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi conferred an award for excellence in public administration to PM Gati Shakti national master plan (NMP) initiative.
- The award was presented to the Department for Promotion of Internal Trade (DPIIT) in the category 'Innovation-Central' for the successful implementation of the prestigious 'PM Gatishakti National Master Plan' programme.
- The Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration has been instituted to recognize the extraordinary and innovative work done by districts and organizations of the Central and State Governments for public welfare.
- It is a transformative approach to economic growth and sustainable development.

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana Award

- Karnataka received the National Award for Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and the award was accepted by Shivayogi Kalasad, Secretary, Department of Agriculture.

- Karnataka was recognized as the leading state in implementing the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) scheme during a national conference in Chhattisgarh.

- According to agriculture department officials, an amount of Rs 687.4 crore has been settled for 5.66 lakh farmers with pending claims since 2018.

- In Karnataka, the PMFBY scheme is being implemented through a state designed and developed portal called 'SANRAKSHAN' created in collaboration with the National Informatics Center (NIC).

First Woman IAF Officer to Get Gallantry Award

- Wing Commander Deepika Mishra became the first woman officer of the Indian Air Force to receive a gallantry award.
- Wing Commander Mishra, a Rajasthan-based helicopter pilot, has been awarded the Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry) for ‘extraordinary courage’ displayed during a flood relief operation in Madhya Pradesh.
- IAF chief Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhary presented the Yudh Seva Medal at Vayu Sena Auditorium Subroto Park New Delhi.
- Two IAF officers were awarded Yudh Seva Medal, 13 officers and air warriors received Vayu Sena Medal (Gallantry), 13 officers Vayu Sena Medal and 30 Vishisht Seva Medal.

Santokba Humanitarian Award

- The prestigious Santokba Humanitarian Award was presented to Sonam Wangchuk, a notable engineer, innovator, educationist, sustainable development reformist, and founder-director of the Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL).

- The award carries a cash prize of Rs 1 crore and has been instituted in the memory of Late Santokba Dholakia, mother of SRK and SRKKF founder president Govind Dholakia.

- Wangchuk is the inventor of the Ice Stupa technique which creates artificial glaciers used to store winter water in the form of cone-shaped ice piles and solve the water crisis in Ladakh.

- The SECMOL campus, designed by Wangchuk, runs on solar power and does not use fossil fuels for cooking, lighting or heating.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Military Advisor to National Security Council

- Former Vice Chief of the Air Staff Air Marshal Sandeep Singh (Retd) has been appointed as

the new Military Advisor to the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS).

- He will replace General Anil Chauhan, who was appointed Chief of Defense Staff.

- Sandeep Singh was commissioned into the Indian Air Force in December 1983 as a fighter pilot.

- He has flown a number of aircraft, and has close to 4,900 hours of operational and test flying experience on Su-30 MKI, MiG-29, MiG-21, AN-32, Avro, Jaguar and Mirage 2000.
- He also played a key role in the induction, production and arming of the Su-30 MKI aircraft in India.

New Chairman of NTRO

- Arun Sinha was appointed as the new chairman of the National Technical Research Organization (NTRO) by the Government of India.

- Arun Sinha, a 1984 batch IPS officer of Kerala cadre, was the acting chairman of NTRO before becoming the chairman.

- NTRO is a technical intelligence agency based in India.

- It works under the National Security Advisor in the Prime Minister's Office and was established in 2004.

- The agency follows the same "norms of conduct" as other intelligence agencies in India such as the Intelligence Bureau and the Research and Analysis Wing.
- As a technical intelligence agency, NTRO specialises in the interception and analysis of electronic communications.

President of the Republic of Cuba

- Miguel Díaz-Canel has been re-elected as President of the Republic of Cuba for a second five-year term by the National Assembly of the People's Power.

- Salvador Valdés Mesa has also been re-elected as Vice President.

- Díaz-Canel received 97.66% of the vote, while Valdés Mesa received 93.4%.

- The leadership body of the National Assembly was re-elected by parliamentarians.

DEFENCE

Exercise INIOCHOS-23

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) will be participating in Exercise INIOCHOS-23, a multi-national air exercise hosted by the Hellenic Air Force, the air force of Greece.
- The exercise will be conducted at the Andravida Air Base in Greece from 24 Apr 2023 to 04 May 2023.
- The Indian Air Force will be participating with four Su-30 MKI and two C-17 aircraft.
- The exercise will be conducted in a realistic combat scenario involving a wide variety of air and surface assets.
- It will also enable participating parties to engage in professional interactions, providing valuable insight into each other's best practices.
- The exercise aims to enhance international cooperation, synergy and interoperability among the participating air forces.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Jaideep Mukherjee Launches his Autobiography ‘Crosscourt’

- Renowned tennis player Jaideep Mukherjee released his autobiography titled ‘Crosscourt’ in the presence of prominent Indian tennis players such as Ramesh Krishnan and Somdev Devvarman.
- The book provides an insight into Mukherjee's life and describes his journey as a successful tennis player.
- In addition to tennis, ‘Crosscourt’ also covers various aspects of Mukherjee's personal life, including her successes, failures, relationships and behind-the-scenes moments.
- Sharmin Mukherjee, Jaideep Mukherjee's wife, was instrumental in encouraging and assisting him in writing the book.

New Book Titled 'Sachin@50 - Celebrating a Maestro'

- Renowned sports historian and TV show host Boria Majumdar released a new book titled

'Sachin@50 - Celebrating a Maestro'on the occasion of Sachin Tendulkar's 50th birthday.

- The book has been conceptually designed and curated by Majumdar, with a special back cover note penned by Gulzar.
- The book traces Tendulkar's journey to success, starting from his teenage debut where he gained global recognition in 1989.
- The book also includes contributions from eminent personalities from other fields such as Abhinav Bindra, Farhan Akhtar, Prahlad Kakkar and Viswanathan Anand.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Earth Day

- World Earth Day is celebrated every year on 22 April to show support for environmental protection.
- It aims to create awareness among people about environmental protection.
- The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970.
- The official theme for World Earth Day 2023 is ‘Invest in our Planet’.
- The idea of Earth Day was proposed by peace activist John McConnell at a UNESCO conference in San Francisco in 1969.