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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 27-06-2024

NATIONAL NEWS

India's First Coal Gasification Pilot Project Launched in Jharkhand

The government of India-owned Coal India Limited subsidiary company, Eastern Coalfields Limited, has launched a pilot project in underground coal gasification at the Kasta coal block in Jamtara District, Jharkhand.

The coal will not be removed from the mine, and the coal gasification process will take place within the mine.

If the project is successful, it will create transformative opportunities for India's energy sector, showcasing the sustainable and efficient use of the country's coal resources.

The project aims to prove that underground gasification at the coal-bearing site is economically viable.

It will convert coal into valuable gasses like methane, hydrogen, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide.

These gasses will be used to produce synthetic natural gas, chemical feedstocks for fuels, fertilisers, explosives, and other industrial applications.

64th International Sugar Organisation Council Meeting in New Delhi

The 64th International Sugar Organization Council meeting was commenced on 25th June 2024 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

Delegates from more than 30 countries and representatives of many international organisations are expected to participate in the meeting to be held from 25-27 June 2024 , to discuss issues related to the sugar industry and biofuels sectors.

India was elected as the chairman of the International Sugar Council for 2024 at the 63rd International Sugar Organisation Council meeting held in London, the United Kingdom in 2023.

According to the International Sugar Organisation, 110 countries in the world produce sugar either from sugarcane or from sugar beet.

India is the largest consumer and second largest producer of sugar in the world, with a share of

about 15 per cent in global sugar consumption and about 20 per cent in sugar production.

The International Sugar Organisation was founded in 1968 as an inter governmental body to provide a forum for the major sugar-producing, consuming and trading countries to discuss related to the sugar industry.

Union Territory Of Ladakh Achieves Full Functional Literacy ULLAS

According to the Union Ministry of Education, the Union Territory of Ladakh has achieved full functional literacy under the ULLAS-Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram.

According to the Union Education Ministry, Ladakh has achieved more than 97 percent literacy. This was announced by the Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Dr B.D Mishra on 25 June 2024 at a function in Sindhu Sanskritik Kendra (SSK), Leh.

According to the Education Ministry, more than 77 lakh people have benefitted from the scheme.

The ULLAS (Understanding of Lifelong Learning for All in Society) Nav Bharat Saaksharta Karyakram is a centrally sponsored scheme being implemented from 2022-23 to 2026-27.

The scheme seeks to cover all aspects of Adult Education to align with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The NEP 2020 has recommendations for Adult Education and Lifelong Learning.

The total outlay for the scheme is Rs.1037.90 crore for 2022-23 to 2026-27duration. The government of India's share is Rs.700 crore, and the state's share is Rs.337.90 crore.

Delhi’s IGI Airport Launches Fast-Track Immigration Programme

Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the ‘Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP)’ at Delhi Airport’s Terminal 3, aimed at enhancing the travel experience for Indian nationals and OCI cardholders.

Objective is to provide faster, easier and more secure travel experience for Indian passport holders and OCI cardholders.

It was implemented by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Civil Aviation, and Bureau of Immigration.

It allows use of dedicated e-gates at Terminal 3 to bypass regular immigration queues and facilitates smoother arrival and departure processes.

It requires an Indian passport with a minimum six months validity at the time of application.

Applicants found eligible, will need to provide Biometrics (fingerprint and face image) in addition to required information as per data fields provided in the application form.

The enrolment to the programme shall be done after necessary verifications and fulfilment of eligibility.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Srinagar Named 4th Indian 'World Craft City' by World Craft Council

Srinagar, a City in Jammu and Kashmir has become the 4th Indian city to be recognised as a 'World Craft City' by the World Craft Council (WCC), 3 years after it was designated as part of the UNESCO Creative City Network (UCCN) for crafts and folk arts.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration applied for this recognition in 2021 alongside the UNESCO designation.

The WCC tag for Srinagar will help artisans in the long term by enhancing global recognition and demand for our handicrafts.

Jaipur (City in Rajasthan) Malappuram (City in Kerala) and Mysore (City in Karnataka) are the other Indian cities that have previously been recognised as World Craft Cities.

As of now, at least 10 different forms of craftsmanship survive in Srinagar and its suburbs, including papier-mâché, walnut wood carving, carpets, Sozni embroidery and Pashmina and Kani shawls.

Kerala's Kozhikode Named India's First UNESCO 'City of Literature'

Kozhikode in north Kerala, known for its rich cultural heritage, was officially declared as India's first United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 'City of Literature'.

This prestigious recognition, part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), celebrates cities worldwide for their commitment to creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development.

In October 2023, Kozhikode had earned a place in the 'Literature' category of the UCCN.

The Kerala government also announced that from this coming year (2024), June 23 will be celebrated as the 'City of Literature' Day of Kozhikode, a place known for literary greats like the late S K Pottakkad and Vaikom Muhammed Basheer.

Tourism Minister P A Mohammed Riyas unveiled the logo of the 'City of Literature' by UNESCO.

Other cities in the new list include Bukhara (Crafts and Folk Art), Casablanca (Media Arts), Chongqing (Design), Kathmandu (Film), Rio de Janeiro (Literature), and Ulaanbaatar (Crafts and Folk Art).

The newly designated Creative Cities are invited to participate in the 2024 UCCN Annual Conference from July 1-5, 2024, in Braga, Portugal, under the theme 'Bringing Youth to the Table for the Next Decade'

BANKING

SBI to Open 400 Branches in 2024-25

According to the State Bank of India, Chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara, the bank plans to open 400 branches in India in the 2024-25 financial years.

India's largest scheduled commercial bank opened 137 branches in 2023-24, of which 59 were rural branches.

The SBI chairman announced that despite the increase in digital transactions by SBI customers, the physical bank branches are needed to provide customer services in newly emerging areas of wealth management and advisory services.

The government of India-owned SBI has over 22,500 branches, 63,580 ATMs/ADWMs, and 82,900 business outlets in the country as of March 2024.

SBI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of External Affairs to integrate its payment gateway, SBIePay, with the ministries eMigrate portal.

After the successful integration of SBIePay with the eMigrate portal, Indian migrant workers, Recruiting Agents (RAs), and other users can make various emigration-related payments, including transactions through UPI, credit/debit cards, and NEFT through net banking of all Indian banks, all with no zero fees.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Intelligence Bureau Chief Tapan Kumar Deka Extended for One Year

The Appointment Committee of the Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved an extension of one year service to the incumbent Intelligence Bureau Director General Tapan Kumar Deka.

According to the Department of Personnel and Training, Tapan Kumar Deka will continue in office till 30 June 2025.

Tapan Kumar Deka was appointed as the Director General of the Intelligence Bureau in 2022 for a term of two years after the retirement of Arvind Kumar.

Tapan Kumar Deka's term as the Director General of the Intelligence Bureau was to end on 30 June 2024.

Tapan Kumar Deka is a 1988 Himachal Pradesh cadre Indian Police Service (IPS) officer. He worked

for almost two decades in the Intelligence Bureau before being appointed as the Director General of the Intelligence Bureau.

Before becoming the chief of the Intelligence Bureau, Tapan Deka headed the Operations desk of the Intelligence Bureau and was tracking terrorists and religious radicalisation for the past two decades.

Om Birla Elected as The Speaker of The 18th Lok Sabha

Om Birla, a member of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate, was re-elected speaker of the 18th Lok Sabha on 26 June 2024.

He was elected by voice vote after the opposition party did not press for the counting of votes.

Om Birla was also the speaker of the 17th Lok Sabha. Om Birla is the 17th person to be elected as the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.

By convention, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha are chosen by consensus between the ruling and opposition parties.

A three-time member of Lok Sabha, Om Birla was elected from the Kota constituency of Rajasthan in the 2014,2019 and 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

SPORTS

First Indian Woman Cricketer to Score Consecutive Centuries in ODIs

Smriti Mandhana, renowned for her aggressive batting style, created history in Indian cricket during the recent ODI series against South Africa.

Mandhana scored a remarkable 343 runs across three ODIs against South Africa.

This achievement broke Jaya Sharma's previous record of 308 runs in five innings versus New Zealand in 2003-04.

She became the first Indian woman cricketer to score consecutive centuries in ODIs.

Mandhana's centuries in the first two matches showcased her outstanding form and consistent performance.

In the final ODI, Mandhana narrowly missed the opportunity to become the second player globally to achieve three consecutive centuries in ODIs.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

Every year on June 26th, the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking 2024 is commemorated to raise awareness about the impact and negative consequences that drugs have on society.

Theme for the year 2024 is “The evidence is clear: invest in prevention”

On December 7, 1987, the United Nations General Assembly established June 26 as International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. During the early twentieth century, the global epidemic of drug usage was already recognized.

Illicit drugs and drug trafficking pose a significant health risk to humanity.

Even though the younger generation is aware that drugs are hazardous to them, they continue to use them for recreational purposes.