

IACE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

1, 2 & 3rd JULY 2023

DESCRIPTIVE

❖ Turkmenistan unveils 'Arkadag', a smart city in honor of the national leader

- A US\$5 billion 'smart' city named Arkadag was inaugurated in Turkmenistan, in honour of former strongman leader Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov.
- Turkmenistan President, Serdar Berdymukhamedov has unveiled the city around 30km southwest of the capital, Ashgabat.
- The new city is built in the foothills of the picturesque Kopet-Dag mountains and named after Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov.
- He ruled the country between 2006 and 2022 and now carries the title Hero Arkadag (Protector).

❖ India, Philippines to upgrade defense partnership, boost maritime security

- India and the Philippines decided to collaborate in the defense sector, with a particular focus on the maritime domain at Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation.
- Both will develop their ties through different initiatives including official-level interactions, the resident Defense Attaché office in Manila, and the consideration of a concessional Line of Credit.
- The bilateral ties will strengthen the partnership between the two countries in various fields.

❖ Gernot Dollner appointed as Chairman and CEO of Audi

- German luxury car brand Audi has appointed Gernot Dollner as Chairman of the Board of Management, effective September 1, 2023.
- He will take over Markus Duesmann.

➤ Gernot Dollner joined Volkswagen as a Ph.D. candidate in 1993 and subsequently served in a number of management roles at Porsche, including as head of Concept Development and head of the Panamera Series.

➤ Since 2021, he has overseen the Volkswagen Group's Product and Group Strategy and the General Secretariat.

❖ **World Bank approves \$1.5 billion for India's low-carbon energy sector**

➤ The World Bank has approved \$1.5 billion in financing to accelerate the development of India's low-carbon energy sector.

➤ Aim: To help India promote low-carbon energy by scaling up renewable energy, developing green hydrogen, and stimulating climate finance for low-carbon energy investments

➤ The program will support the successful implementation of the National Green Hydrogen Mission which aims to stimulate \$100 billion in private-sector investment by 2030.

❖ **Rajindar Singh Dhatt honoured with the Points of Light Award 2023**

➤ British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak honored Rajindar Singh Dhatt (101) with a Points of Light award.

➤ He was recognized for his service and work running the 'Undivided Indian Ex-Servicemen's Association'.

➤ The Points of Light award recognize outstanding people whose service is making a difference in their communities and whose stories can inspire others towards innovative solutions to social challenges in their own communities and beyond.

❖ **India's first-ever report on Critical Minerals for India unveiled**

➤ Union Minister of Mines Pralhad Joshi has unveiled India's first-ever report on Critical Minerals for India.

- The report identifies 30 critical minerals essential for sectors including defense, agriculture, and telecom.
- This list marks a milestone in India's pursuit of self-reliance and security in mineral resources, aligning with the vision of achieving 'Net Zero' targets.
- Aim: To guide policy formulation, strategic planning, and investment decisions in this sector.

❖ **After Merger, HDFC to vault into ranks of world's most valuable banks**

- According to Bloomberg, after the tie-up of HDFC Bank Ltd and Housing Development Finance Corp, the lender would rank fourth in equity market capitalization.
- It's valued at about \$172 billion.
- With the merger likely effective July 1, the new HDFC Bank entity will have around 120 million customers, which is greater than the population of Germany.
- JP Morgan Chase & Co ranked first, followed by Industrial and Commercial Bank of China Ltd and Bank of America Corp.

❖ **Meta launches \$250K mixed reality fund for 5 Indian startups**

- Meta declared a fresh Mixed Reality program in India that has an award of \$250,000 for homegrown new companies and developers to construct applications and experiences
- They can assemble applications utilizing the expansive scope of machine perception, and AI capabilities for the Meta Quest Platform and Metaverse
- Aim: To foster innovation and establish a national XR technology ecosystem
- A selected group of 5 Indian developers and new companies will get a monetary grant.

❖ **International Asteroid Day 2023: 30th June**

- International Asteroid Day is observed annually on 30 June to raise awareness about the potential hazards posed by asteroid impacts.
- It also aims to educate people about the global crisis communication measures to be taken in the event of a credible near-Earth object threat.
- In December 2016, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) passed a resolution (A/RES/71/90) establishing June 30th as International Asteroid Day.

❖ **Ministry of Culture and Canara Bank signed an MoU**

- The Ministry of Culture and Canara Bank signed an MoU for the disbursement of financial assistance to veteran artists under the “Scheme for Financial Assistance for Veteran Artists”.
- Ministry of Culture has administered a Scheme under which financial assistance of Rs. 6000 per month is provided to artists and scholars above 60 years
- Eligibility: Contributed in their specialized fields of performing arts and culture in their active age or are still contributing.

❖ **ICICI Lombard, ICICI Prudential launch combi product ‘iShield’**

- ICICI Lombard General Insurance and ICICI Prudential Life Insurance have jointly launched a combi product, ‘iShield’.
- Aim: To provide customers with both health and life insurance under the “use and file” procedure
- The “use and file” procedure allows an insurer to launch a product without prior approval of the regulator.
- A combi product offers the benefits of life insurance, along with that of general or other insurance covers.

❖ National Doctor's Day - 1st July

- National Doctor's Day is celebrated every year on 1st July in India to appreciate and honour the valuable contribution of doctors and health care professionals in the world.
- The day is celebrated in India to recognize the selfless service and efforts of doctors for the betterment of the people.
- The Indian Medical Association (IMA) organises various programs and activities on National Doctor's Day.
- Theme for National Doctor's Day 2023 is "Celebrating Resilience and Healing Hands".
- It aims to recognize and appreciate the tireless efforts of medical professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

❖ Prime Minister launched the National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission in Madhya Pradesh

- On July 1, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the National Sickle Cell Anemia Elimination Mission in Shahdol, Madhya Pradesh.
- The mission aims to eliminate sickle cell anaemia by 2047.
- This mission will be implemented in 278 districts of 17 states of India.
- The targeted states include Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Bihar and Uttarakhand.
- The mission focuses on creating awareness and universal testing among about seven crore people in the age group of 0-40 years in the affected tribal areas.

❖ **Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated the best tourism facilities in the historical lighthouses of Gujarat**

- Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways and AYUSH Sarbananda Sonowal inaugurated tourism facilities at the historic lighthouses of Dwarka, Gopnath and Veraval in Gujarat on 1 July 2023.
- The initiative is in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of turning India's lighthouses into captivating heritage tourist destinations.
- During the 75th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', the Prime Minister highlighted the unique appeal of lighthouses as tourist attractions and identified 72 more lighthouses to promote tourism.
- The objective of the inauguration is to showcase the rich culture, importance and charm of these lighthouses while attracting tourists from all over the world.
- The tourist facilities combine historical charm with modern conveniences, providing visitors with an exceptional experience.
- Collaborative efforts of Central Ministries and State Governments will be employed for consultation and implementation.

❖ **GSI discovers India's largest natural arch in Odisha**

- The Geological Survey of India (GSI) discovered a "Natural Arch" in Odisha's Sundergarh Forest Division.
- This natural arch originated approximately 184 million years ago during the Lower to Middle Jurassic period.
- The GSI has proposed a Geo Heritage tag for the arch, which aims to become the largest natural arch in India with this recognition.
- This oval shaped arch has a base length of 30 meters and a height of 12 metres.
- The maximum height and width of the natural arch are 7 meters and 15 meters respectively.

- The conservation of geo-heritage sites including Sundergarh Natural Arch requires special attention and protection.
- GSI declares these sites as National Geological Monuments and protects them.
- Collaboration with State Governments to implement necessary measures for safety and maintenance.

❖ **India ranked 100th in FIFA men's football rankings**

- 'World Men's Football Ranking' released by 'FIFA' in June 2023; In which FIFA World Cup 2022 winner Argentina (with 1843.73 points) has topped the list.
- India has been ranked 100th (with a total score of 1204.90) in the 'World Men's Football Ranking' by 'FIFA'.
- The Indian men's football team has leapfrogged teams like Lebanon and New Zealand to reach the 100th spot in the latest FIFA world rankings.
- It is after five years that the Indian men's football team entered the top 100 club after slipping from the 96th position in 2018.
- This is the fourth best ranking achieved by the Indian men's football team in history.
- The team's rank came from 94th rank in 1996, 99th rank in 1993 and 96th rank from 2017 to 2018.

❖ **World Sports Journalists Day - 2 July**

- World Sports Journalists Day is celebrated across the world on 2 July every year.
- The day honours the achievements of sports media professionals and inspires them to put in more efforts to spread knowledge about sports among the general public.
- Many New companies organize special events to honor sports journalists on this special day.

- It aims to recognize the efforts of individuals involved in sports journalism.

History of World Sports Journalists Day

- It was established in 1994 by the International Sports Press Association (AIPS) on 2 July to mark the establishment of AIPS as an organization on the occasion of the Summer Olympics in Paris.
- Since its inception, the day is dedicated to recognizing the contributions and achievements of countless sports media professionals.

❖ Startup20 Shikhar summit begins in Haryana's Gurugram

- The two-day Startup20 Shikhar summit organised by Startup20 Engagement Group began on 2 July 2023 in Gurugram, Haryana under India's G20 chairmanship.
- The importance of education and awareness in nurturing a culturally sensitive startup ecosystem was emphasised during the conference.
- The Startup20 initiative aims to foster a conducive business environment in the G20 countries and support talented individuals from diverse backgrounds to drive commercialization, expansion and innovation.
- Haryana Capital - Chandigarh
- Governor - Bandaru Dattatreya
- Chief Minister - Manohar Lal Khattar
- Minister of State for Commerce and Industry - Som Prakash

❖ Max Verstappen wins Austrian Grand Prix 2023

- Max Verstappen took a stunning victory in the Austrian Grand Prix 2023.
- The Austrian Grand Prix victory marked Verstappen's fifth consecutive victory and seven from nine races in the current season.

- The previous year's winner at this circuit, Charles Leclerc, finished second at the Austrian Grand Prix, crossing the finish line 5.2 seconds behind Verstappen.
- Sergio Pérez, driving for the Red Bull team, finished third, 17.2 seconds behind the race leader.

❖ **Vice Admiral Atul Anand takes over as Additional Secretary, DMA**

- Vice Admiral Atul Anand assumed the role of Additional Secretary, Department of Military Affairs on 3 July 2023.
- Atul Anand succeeds Lt Gen Anil Puri, who retires on February 28, 2023.
- Vice Admiral Atul Anand was commissioned into the Executive Branch of the Indian Navy on 1 January 1988.
- He is an alumnus of National Defense Academy (71st Course, Delta Squadron), Defense Services Command and Staff College, Mirpur (Bangladesh) and National Defense College, New Delhi.

❖ **132nd Durand Cup tournament organized in Kolkata**

- The "Trophy Tour" of the 132nd edition of Durand Cup, India's oldest football tournament, was flagged off at a function held at Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt.
- It was flagged off by Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pandey, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhary and President of All India Football Federation (AIFF) Kalyan Choubey.
- This tournament will be organized from 03 August to 03 September 2023 in Kolkata.
- 24 teams including teams from Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh will participate in the 132nd edition of the tournament.
- Foreign teams are participating in the tournament after a gap of 27 years. The tournament is open to all club teams.
- It is organized by the Durand Football Tournament Society (DFTS) under the aegis of the All India Football Federation (AIFF).

➤ Basically the tournament has always been a symbol of excellence, sportsmanship and high point of competitiveness in the field of sports.

❖ **Sarbananda Sonowal launches campaign to transform iconic 75 Lighthouses**

➤ Union Minister of Ports, Sarbananda Sonowal launched a campaign to transform 75 historic Lighthouses into Tourism Spots in India.

➤ Under this campaign, the historic lighthouses were renovated with adequate facilities to act as tourist spots.

➤ It is in line with the visionary approach of PM Modi to transform India's distinctive lighthouses into captivating tourism sites.

➤ Aim: To showcase the rich culture, significance, and allure of these magnificent structures

❖ **Canada launches a remote-work scheme for digital nomads**

➤ Canada is developing a scheme to attract digital nomads to the country.

➤ This plan aims to make Canada a go-to destination for digital nomads.

➤ Under current Canadian immigration rules, digital nomads can stay in Canada for up to six months under a visitor status while still working for foreign companies.

➤ They are also planning to collaborate with public and private partners to access if more policies were needed to attract global remote workers.

❖ **Former Punjab deputy speaker Bir Devinder Singh passes away**

➤ Former deputy speaker of Punjab Vidhan Sabha and two-time Congress MLA Bir Devinder Singh passed away at 73.

➤ The senior politician was diagnosed with cancer in his food pipe (esophagus) around 10 to 15 days ago.

➤ He was known to be a politician who called a spade a spade without caring about political repercussions.

➤ During his political career, he was associated with the Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), People's Party of Punjab, SAD (Taksali), and SAD (Sanyukt).

❖ Zoological Survey of India celebrates 108th ZSI Day

➤ Union Minister for Environment & Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment Bhupender Yadav inaugurated a three-day celebration program of the 108th Zoological Survey of India Day in Kolkata.

➤ The Special Focus of this day is 'Mission Life'.

➤ ZSI has completed its 108 glorious years dedicated to the service of faunal diversity.

➤ Minister has also appreciated the efforts of ZSI in establishing globally well-known protected areas.

❖ Fiscal deficit narrows to 11.8% as non-tax revenue surges

➤ The fiscal deficit of the government for April-May 2023 has been narrowed to 11.8% of annual estimates to ₹2.10 trillion, from 12.3% a year ago.

➤ Reason: Sharp jump in non-tax revenue and lower revenue spending, which combined to offset a robust increase in capital expenditure and decline in net tax revenue

➤ Total receipts during April-May 2023 stood at ₹4.16 trillion (15.3% of the annual estimates) of which tax receipts stood at ₹2.78 trillion.

❖ Regional Symposium on Child Protection, Safety and Child Welfare

➤ The Ministry of Women and Child Development has organized a one-day Regional Symposium on Child Protection, Safety, and Child Welfare in New Delhi.

➤ The event was participated by the states and UTs i.e. Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Chandigarh, J&K, and Ladakh.

➤ It started with a series of regional symposiums to be held across the country to raise awareness and outreach about child protection, safety, and welfare issues.