

IACE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

21ST June 2023

DESCRIPTIVE

❖ **Govt. appoints SBI MD Janakiraman as RBI DG**

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has selected State Bank of India MD Swaminathan Janakiraman for the post of Deputy Governor in the Reserve Bank of India.
- He will have a tenure of three years from the date of joining or hold the post till further orders, whichever is earlier.
- At SBI, Swaminathan is in charge of corporate banking and subsidiaries. He has vast experience in the areas of retail and international banking, trade finance, digital banking and transaction banking products.
- He will succeed Deputy Governor M.K.Jain whose tenure will end this month.
- Apart from Jain, the three Deputy Governors of the RBI at present are – Michael D Patra, M Rajeshwar Rao and T Rabi Sankar.

❖ **Puri Rath Yatra**

- The Rath Yatra of Odisha, depicting the annual journey of Lord Jagannath, considered to be an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, witnesses the coming together of the entire community in celebration of the grace and divinity of the lord.
- Lord Jagannath is considered a non-sectarian deity.
- He is significant regionally in the Indian states of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar, Gujarat, Assam, Manipur and Tripura.
- The Jagannath temple in Puri, Odisha is particularly significant in Vaishnavism and is regarded as one of the Char Dham pilgrimage sites in India.

- The temple is built in the Nagara style. It is one of the best surviving specimens of Kalinga architecture, namely Odisha art and architecture.
- The presiding deities of the main temple, Sri Mandira, Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Goddess Subhadra, with the celestial wheel Sudarshana are taken out from the temple on their respective chariots.
- The huge, colorfully decorated chariots are drawn by hundreds and thousands of devotees on the badadanda, the grand avenue to the Gundicha temple, some two miles away to the North.

❖ **International Yoga Day – June 21**

- International Yoga Day is celebrated every year on 21 June.
- The day aims to promote the many benefits of practicing yoga.
- The date chosen coincides with the summer solstice, the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
- International Yoga Day encourages physical, mental and spiritual harmony.
- The theme chosen for International Day of Yoga 2023 is 'Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'
- The theme represents the shared desire of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.
- Yoga promotes meditation, stress reduction, and overall health and vitality.
- In 2023, the International Day of Yoga will take place on June 21 at the United Nations Headquarters under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- This is the first time that a yoga session is being organized by the Prime Minister at this place.

❖ Author Salman Rushdie awarded the prestigious German Peace Prize in 2023

- British-American author, Salman Rushdie has been selected for the prestigious German Peace Prize 2023 for his literary work and his resolve and positive attitude in the face of constant danger.
- He would receive the award in Frankfurt on October 22, 2023.
- Cash prize: €25,000 (\$27,300)
- This prize was established in 1950 to recognize a personality committed to serving international understanding between nations and cultures through their work.

❖ Ravi Sinha appointed as new chief of the Research and Analysis Wing

- Senior IPS officer, Ravi Sinha has been appointed as the new head of the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) for a tenure of two years.
- He would succeed Samant Goel, who completes his four-year tenure on June 30, 2023.
- Ravi Sinha is a 1988-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Chhattisgarh cadre.
- At present, he is serving as Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat.
- Earlier, Sinha served in Jammu and Kashmir, the northeast, and foreign countries.

❖ Himalayan Glaciers on Track to Lose up to 75% of Ice by 2100

- According to a new report, Glaciers in Asia's Hindu Kush Himalaya could lose up to 75% of their volume by the end of the century.
- Reason: Global warming, is causing dangerous flooding and water shortages for the 240 million people who live in the mountainous region.

➤ The Hindu Kush Himalaya stretches 3,500 km (2,175 miles) across Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan.

➤ The international scientist team found that ice loss on the peaks of Everest and K2 is speeding up.

➤ In 2010, the glaciers shed as much as 65% of ice, which was faster than they had in the preceding decade.

❖ **UN adopt first-ever treaty to protect marine life in high seas**

➤ UN has adopted the first-ever treaty to protect marine life on the high seas, approved by delegates from the 193 member nations.

➤ The treaty will create a new body to manage the conservation of ocean life and establish marine protected areas on the high seas.

➤ It also establishes ground rules for conducting environmental impact assessments for commercial activities in the oceans.

➤ The new treaty is under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, came into force in 1994.

❖ **Karnataka's free power scheme, 'Gruha Jyothi Scheme'**

➤ Karnataka government has launched a free power scheme named 'Gruha Jyothi scheme' for providing free electricity up to 200 units a month.

➤ Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah also stated that the scheme also extends to tenants living on rent if their electricity consumption matches the scheme's criteria.

➤ The beneficiaries will get a 'zero bill' starting August 1 if usage is within their entitlement.

➤ The Gruha Jyothi scheme is part of the Congress government's five poll promises.

❖ Intel and Germany sign agreement for \$32.8 billion chip plant investment

- Intel has signed an agreement with the German government for investing more than 30 billion euros (\$32.8 billion) in a chip manufacturing site in Magdeburg, Germany.
- An agreement was signed between German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Intel CEO Pat Gelsinger.
- Intel has acquired the land for two semiconductor facilities in Magdeburg in eastern Germany in November 2022 and is expected to start production in four or five years.

❖ Integrated Simulator Complex 'Dhruv' inaugurated by Defense Minister Rajnath Singh

- Defense Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the Integrated Simulator Complex (ISC) 'Dhruv' at the Southern Naval Command, Kochi on June 21, 2023.
- ISC 'DHRUV' hosts state-of-the-art indigenously built simulators.
- Simulators greatly enhance practical training in the Indian Navy.
- The simulators provide real-time experience on navigation, fleet operations and naval tactics.
- Simulators will be used for training personnel from friendly countries.
- These simulators are indicative of the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative.
- Other indigenously developed simulators in the complex include Combat Management System and Maritime Domain Awareness Lab.

❖ Oman Creates History as First Foreign Government to Promote Country through Yoga

- The Indian Embassy in Oman has introduced a unique video titled 'Soulful Yoga, Serene Oman' on the occasion of the International Day of Yoga 2023.
- This initiative is considered pioneering and showcases the beauty of Oman while featuring yoga enthusiasts from different countries.

- The video stands out as it is a collaborative effort between the Indian Embassy and 'Visit Oman,' a subsidiary of Oman's Ministry of Tourism.
- This partnership marks the first instance of a foreign government using yoga to promote its own country, highlighting the significance of this collaboration.
- The video not only demonstrates the increasing popularity of yoga worldwide but also highlights its growing prominence in Oman.

❖ **Karnataka's Anna Bhagya Scheme**

- The Karnataka government is currently facing challenges in implementing the Anna Bhagya scheme starting from July 1 due to the unavailability of the required amount of rice.
- The Food Corporation of India (FCI) has halted the sale of rice to state governments, including Karnataka, since June 12.
- This discontinuation of rice supply has created difficulties for the implementation of the Anna Bhagya scheme.
- Telangana and Andhra Pradesh expressed their inability to supply, while the Chhattisgarh government offered to supply 1.5 lakh tonnes.
- About Anna Bhagya Scheme:
 - The state government of Karnataka intends to increase the allocation of free rice from 5 kg to 10 kg per person on Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards under the Anna Bhagya scheme.
 - The aim of this increase in free rice allocation is to provide more support and food security to the persons belonging to BPL category.
 - The implementation of this revised allocation is scheduled to begin from July 1.
 - The increased allocation of free rice will cost the state government an estimated ₹840 crore per month.
 - Annually, the scheme is expected to cost Rs 10,092 crore to the state exchequer.

❖ **India's first mRNA-based Omicron-specific booster vaccine approved**

- Gennova Biopharmaceuticals Ltd informed that its mRNA COVID-19 booster vaccine has received Emergency Use Authorization from the Drugs Controller General of India.
- The vaccine, 'GEMCOVAC-OM' is approved against the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV-2.
- GEMCOVAC-OM has demonstrated robust immune responses in phase 3 clinical trials conducted at 20 centers across 13 cities in India.
- It was stable in a 2-8 degrees celcius range and could be stored in ordinary refrigerators.
- It could be administered into the skin via a 'needle-free' PharmaJet system.
- It has a greater "safetey" profile as Covishield and generated more neutralising antibodies.

❖ **Qatar inks second long-term gas supply deal with China**

- Qatar announced a second 27-year supply deal with a Chinese company as it expands production from the world's biggest natural gas field.
- The agreement, to supply four million tonnes annually to the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), matches the terms of a November deal with China's Sinopec as the longest ever seen in the industry.
- Asian countries led by China, Japan and South Korea are the main market for Qatar's gas, which has been increasingly sought by European countries since Russia's invasion of Ukraine early last year.
- This will become the second LNG [Liquefied Natural Gas] sale and purchase agreement to China within the North Field East Expansion Project.

❖ **GMR Hyderabad Air Cargo receives WHO certification**

- GMR Hyderabad Air Cargo has been certified with World Health Organization's Good Distribution practices certification and accredited under the IATA Safety Audit for Ground Operations Programme.

➤ The certification covers areas of the product lifecycle of healthcare products, particularly human pharmaceuticals and active ingredients that arise around storage and transportation activities.

➤ The certification has identified GMR Hyderabad Air Cargo as a competent and reliable partner for pharmaceuticals logistics in India.

❖ **Vishal lifts silver at Special Olympics**

➤ The Indian contingent won its first medal of this year's Special Olympics with T. Vishal clinching a silver in powerlifting.

➤ The 16 - years old from puducherry won a silver in men's squat (122.50 kg), deadlift (155 kg), bench press (85 kg) and combined to put India on the board.

➤ Encouraged by his parents to pursue sports, Vishal's interest was kindled after watching the Paralympics Games.

❖ **Pakistan inks deal with China for nuclear power plant**

➤ China and Pakistan have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to construct a 1,200-megawatt (MW) nuclear power plant.

➤ The MoU to build 'Chashma V (C-5)' facility in the Punjab province was signed between Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) and China National Nuclear Cooperation Overseas Limited (CNOS) in the presence of Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

➤ The signing of the contract was also witnessed by Pang Chunxue, the chargée d'affaires (CdA) of the Chinese embassy in Pakistan.

➤ The upcoming nuclear power facility was part of his government's "energy security plan to diversify the energy mix with a focus on ensuring the provision of cheap electricity to the industry and (provide) relief to the common man.