

IACE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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DESCRIPTIVE

❖ Clean Air Survey-2023

- Indore, renowned for its cleanliness initiatives, has achieved a remarkable feat by securing the top spot in the Clean Air Survey-2023 conducted by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).
- The city, which is known for its pristine environment, emerged as the leader among urban centers with populations exceeding one million, reaffirming its commitment to sustainable living practices.
- Indore clinched an impressive score of 187 out of 200 in the Clean Air Survey-2023, outperforming other cities with comparable population sizes. This achievement underscores Indore's persistent dedication to fostering a pollution-free atmosphere.
- Agra secured the second position with a score of 186 points, closely followed by Thane at the third position with 185.2 points.
- The rankings, evaluated by the CPCB, were based on comprehensive assessments of self-evaluation reports and associated documentation submitted through the 'Prana' portal.
- A total of 130 cities, spanning various population brackets, were considered in the evaluation process.

❖ Mera Bill Mera Adhikar

- The Government of India is introducing the invoice incentive scheme known as "Mera Bill Mera Adhikaar" in collaboration with State Governments to promote the practice of customers requesting invoices or bills for all purchases.
- The Scheme will be launched on September 1, 2023.

- The program's goal is to influence the way people think and act so that they see "Ask for a Bill" as their right and entitlement.
- The initiative will apply to all business-to-consumer invoices provided to customers by GST-registered suppliers in participating states.
- Invoices should be uploaded on the 'Mera Bill Mera Adhikaar' mobile application, which is available on IOS and Android, as well as the web portal 'web.merabill.gst.gov.in'. An Acknowledgement Reference Number (ARN) will be generated for each uploaded invoice, which will be utilised in the prize draw.
- Winning invoices will be chosen at regular intervals (monthly/quarterly) using a random draw process.
- A lucky draw must have at least 200 rupees worth of invoices to qualify.

❖ **33 Khelo India centers are inaugurated across Rajasthan**

- The Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Shri Anurag Singh Thakur inaugurated 33 Khelo India Centres in the State of Rajasthan, at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur.
- It was also announced that Competitions will be organised between the Khelo India Centers while Coaching the Coaches programme will also be extended to the Khelo India Center.
- Coaches as well & the KIC coaches will be trained by getting them attached with our national & international coaches.
- Success of the Khelo India scheme as well as the Target Olympic Podium scheme has resulted in the highest number of medals internationally over the last few years, be it in Olympics or Paralympics or Commonwealth Games or a historic event like a Thomas Cup win.

➤ The total number of Khelo India Centres currently notified across India is 960, out of which 715 are operational KICs. The total number of KICs notified in Rajasthan is 33, out of which 32 KICs are operational.

➤ These KICs are specific training centres looking after sports disciplines like cycling, basketball, wushu, hockey and more.

❖ Amanpreet Singh clinches gold in Men's 25 metre at ISSF World Championship

➤ Indian shooter Amanpreet Singh won the gold medal in Men's 25 metre standard pistol shooting event at the ISSF World Championship 2023, held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

➤ In the Women's 25 metre Standard Pistol shooting event, Tiyaana, Yashita Shokeen and Kritika Sharma managed to win the team bronze with a combined score of 1601.

➤ The two medals on the day took India's tally in the Championship to nine - five gold and four bronze medals.

❖ 26th National Conference on e-Governance to begin in Indore

➤ The 26th National Conference on e-Governance began in Indore to deliberate on providing better facilities to the citizens.

➤ The conference was inaugurated by MP Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Science & Technology Minister Om Prakash Sakhalecha.

➤ The two-day conference is being organized by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances and the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in collaboration with the Government of Madhya Pradesh.

➤ The conference is being conducted on the topic 'Developing India: Empowering Citizens'.

➤ Representatives from 28 states and 9 union territories as well as industries are participating in the conference.

➤ Eleven themes including district-level initiatives, emerging technologies for providing citizen centric services, role of R&D in citizen centric services are being discussed in the conference.

➤ National e-Governance Awards 2023 in 5 categories will also be presented during the conference.

❖ Kerala launches its first AI school in Thiruvananthapuram

➤ Kerala took a significant step towards the integration of technology in education with the inauguration of its first Artificial Intelligence (AI) school in Thiruvananthapuram.

➤ The inauguration ceremony was graced by former President Ram Nath Kovind.

➤ The pioneering AI School, located at Santhigiri Vidyabhavan, has been developed in collaboration with iLearning Engines (ILE) USA, a globally renowned educational platform, and Vedhik eSchool.

➤ According to Vedhik eSchool authorities, AI school introduces an innovative learning approach that harnesses the power of artificial intelligence to offer students an international standard of education. This unique system ensures quality learning experiences not only during school hours but also beyond, through the school's online portal.

➤ AI School is meticulously aligned with the National School Accreditation Standards, as outlined in the New National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

➤ It caters initially to students in classes 8 to 12, providing a comprehensive suite of learning tools and resources.

❖ NTCA approved India's 54th tiger reserve in Rajasthan

➤ India got its 54th tiger reserve in Rajasthan's Karauli and Dholpur districts with the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) approving a proposal in this regard.

➤ This is Rajasthan's fifth tiger reserve after Ranthambore, Sariska, Mukundra Hills and Ramgarh Vishdhari.

➤ The number of tigers in India has increased from 2,967 in 2018 to 3,682 in 2022, an annual rise of 6 per cent, according to government data.

➤ With a 50 per cent increase in the last four years, Madhya Pradesh has the maximum number of tigers in the country (785), followed by Karnataka (563), Uttarakhand (560), and Maharashtra (444).

❖ **Mastercard inks brand partnership with ICC for upcoming World Cup**

➤ The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced a sponsorship agreement with the American multinational financial services corporation, Mastercard.

➤ The brand has become a global partner for the upcoming ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, which is set to be held in India from October 5 to November 19, 2023.

➤ Mastercard puts spectators in the middle of the proceedings ensuring that they can enjoy the game like never before.

➤ The Mastercard cardholders will also be eligible for a number of advantages. These possibilities include the ability to interact with legendary cricketers, see the Men's Cricket World Cup trophy up close, and gain special access to games.

➤ Children of cardholders between the ages of 12 and 18 will also have the opportunity to participate in the flagbearer initiative, while Mastercard cardholders will have access to a variety of discounts on official ICC merchandise.

❖ **NESIDS with an approved outlay of Rs.8139.50 crore**

➤ North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS) with an approved outlay of Rs.8139.50 crore for the period from 2022-23 to 2025-26 was also approved by the Cabinet, with two components viz. NESIDS-Road and NESIDS-Other Than Road Infrastructure (OTRI).

- The scheme is a central sector scheme with 100% central funding.
- The objective of the NESIDS is to support infrastructure development in identified sectors including connectivity in the North Eastern States.

The objectives of the aforesaid schemes of the MDoNER are to supplement the efforts of the different Central Ministries & Departments on one hand and the felt needs of the NE States on the other, for uncovered development/welfare activities.

- The MDoNER Schemes help provide gap-filling support to the eight North Eastern States as per their felt needs, by taking up projects – e.g., for developing infrastructure to mitigate connectivity and social sector deficits and enhancing livelihood and employment opportunities in the region.
- The newly issued detailed schemes' guidelines combined with the concerted efforts of the Ministry and with the kind support of NE States will facilitate to achieve intended objectives in a transparent and accelerated manner.

❖ ISRO's collaboration With Japan

- ISRO's next likely Moon mission is in partnership with its Japanese counterpart, a venture that's gathering steam.
- Lunar Polar Exploration Mission (LUPEX) is a collaborative venture between Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and the Bengaluru-headquartered Indian space agency.
- JAXA and ISRO are developing the rover and lander, respectively.
- The rover will carry not only the instruments of ISRO and JAXA but also those of US space agency NASA and European Space Agency (ESA).
- According to JAXA, the LUPEX mission is aimed at exploring lunar polar region suitability for establishing a base on the Moon for sustainable activities; obtaining knowledge regarding the availability of lunar water-ice resources, and demonstrating lunar and planetary surface exploration technologies such as vehicular transport and overnight survival.

❖ UAE, among 6 countries invited to become new BRICS members

- Six countries including Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the UAE, Argentina and Ethiopia are expected to become members of BRICS starting from 1 January, 2024.
- BRICS began as a group of four countries in the mid-2000s. In 2009, BRICS nations held their first leaders' summit in Russia. It was expanded to include South Africa in 2010.
- This move holds the potential to open the doors for numerous interested countries to align with a coalition committed to championing the interests of the Global South.
- India has always fully supported the expansion of the membership of BRICS.
- The expansion of BRICS was billed as a point of contention between India and China. Experts speculated that China was trying to induct a number of countries which shared its Western-sceptic view of the world.

❖ GeM crosses one lakh crore rupees Gross Merchandise Value in FY 23-24

- Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is an online public procurement portal developed facilitate the procurement of goods and services by various government departments, agencies, and public sector undertakings.
- It was launched in August 2016 as a part of the government's "Digital India" initiative to bring transparency, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness to public procurement.
- GeM aims to simplify the public procurement process, reduce paperwork, and promote the use of digital technology for government procurement.
- GeM has achieved an impressive milestone, crossing INR 1 lakh crore in Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) within a remarkable span of 145 days in the current financial year, FY 2023-24.

- This outstanding achievement underscores GeM's commitment to revolutionizing government procurement and signifies a substantial improvement compared to the previous year, where this GMV landmark was reached in 243 days.
- The average GMV per day has also witnessed significant growth from INR 412 crore per day in FY 22-23 to INR 690 crore per day in FY 23-24.
- This notable milestone firmly establishes GeM as one of the largest public procurement portals globally, both in terms of transaction value and the breadth of the buyer-seller network within its unified digital ecosystem.
- Since inception, GeM has crossed INR 4.91 Lakh Crore in GMV and has facilitated over 1.67 crore orders on the platform.
- Among the noteworthy contributors to this remarkable GMV achievement, the contribution of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) , Central Ministries and State Governments has been 54%, 26% and 20% respectively.