

IACE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

27th October 2023

DESCRIPTIVE

❖ **Joe Biden honours 2 Indian-American scientists for remarkable medical discoveries**

- The Two Indian-American scientists “Ashok Gadgil and Subra Suresh” were awarded the National Medal of Technology and Innovation by US President Joe Biden at the White House.
- President Biden also honoured leading American scientists, technologists, and innovators at the award ceremony.
- The scientists, who were honored at the event, made discoveries enabling lifesaving medical treatments, helping fight the opioid epidemic, improving food security, and much more.
- The National Medal of Science is the nation’s highest scientific honour, established by the US Congress in 1959 and administered by the US National Science Foundation.

❖ **RBI asks private banks to have at least two Whole-Time Directors (WTDs)**

- Reserve Bank of India has asked private banks and wholly owned subsidiaries of foreign banks to ensure at least two Whole Time Directors (WTDs), including the MD and CEO, on their boards to facilitate succession planning.
- The number of Whole Time Directors should be decided by the Board of the bank by taking into account factors such as the size of operations, business complexity, and other relevant aspects.
- The RBI directed banks that currently do not meet this requirement to submit their proposals for the appointment of WTDs under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, within a period of four months from the date of issuance of the circular.

❖ **Kotak Mahindra Bank collaborates with NeSL to issue electronic Bank Guarantee**

- Kotak Mahindra Bank has announced a new partnership with National E-Governance Services Limited (NeSL) to issue its inaugural electronic Bank Guarantee (e-BG) through its platform.
- This collaboration is poised to usher in the era of digital trade, effectively eliminating the traditional paper-based issuance of Bank Guarantees.
- The digital transformation encompasses the issuance, modifications, closures, digital stamping, and signing processes, resulting in a significant reduction in the guaranteed turnaround time (TAT).
- Kotak Mahindra Bank has been at the forefront of providing our customers convenience and ease of banking.
- The partnership with NeSL in providing e-BG for our trade customers eliminates many issues both the lender and issuer face with endless paperwork, including several verification stages.
- **About Kotak Mahindra Bank:**
- **Founder:** Uday Kotak
- **Founded:** 21 November 1985
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai, Maharashtra
- **MD & CEO:** Ashok Vaswani

❖ **First Black Action Hero - Richard Roundtree Passed Away**

- Richard Roundtree, the trailblazing actor who starred as the ultra-smooth private detective in several Shaft films beginning in the early 1970s, has passed away.
- He was born in New Rochelle, New York, was considered as the first Black action hero.

➤ He became one of the leading actors in the blaxploitation genre through his New York street smart John Shaft character in the Gordon Parks-directed film in 1971.

➤ At age 28, it was Roundtree's first feature film appearance after starting his career as a model.

❖ **India to resume visa services for certain categories amid row with Canada**

➤ India has announced plans to resume visa services for certain categories amid a diplomatic crisis with Canada.

➤ According to the High Commission in Ottawa, it would restore services for entry, business, medical, and conference visas.

➤ The development comes amid a brewing diplomatic crisis that had recently prompted the expulsion of more than 40 Canadian diplomats from New Delhi.

➤ The High Commission of India in Ottawa and its Consulates General in Toronto and Vancouver were constrained to suspend visa services temporarily because of safety and security considerations.

➤ After a considered review of the security situation that takes into account some recent Canadian measures in this regard, it has been decided to resume visa services.

❖ **Indians stand at no. 1 position in getting citizenship of rich nations**

➤ According to a recent OECD report, Indians, who are at the forefront of migrating to OECD countries, also lead in acquiring foreign citizenship.

➤ However, Canada has witnessed the highest growth in granting citizenship to foreign nationals.

➤ The report titled "International Migration Outlook: 2023," has shown Indians constitute the largest national group acquiring citizenship in affluent countries.

➤ Canada, in particular, recorded the most significant proportional increase, with a staggering 174% jump between 2021 and 2022.

➤ This surge in numbers makes Canada one of the most sought-after destinations for acquiring citizenship among immigrants.

❖ **Mike Johnson elected as new speaker of US House of Representatives**

- Republican Congressman from Louisiana Mike Johnson has been elected as the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- He replaced Kevin McCarthy.
- The position of Speaker of the House of Representatives is one of the most powerful political chairs in the country and is third in the line of succession after the US President.
- The 56th Speaker of the House of Representatives, he is a four-term Congressman from the Fourth Congressional District.
- Mike Johnson won the election by a vote of 220 to 209 in a divided Congress.
- The Republican Party holds a slim majority in the House with 221 seats compared to the Democrats 212.

❖ **Election Commission to appoint actor Rajkummar Rao as 'National Icon'**

- Actor Rajkummar Rao during an event for his induction as a National Icon by the Election Commission of India (ECI), in New Delhi.
- He, whose portrayal of an official tasked with conducting polls in the Naxal-affected areas of Chhattisgarh in the Hindi film 'Newton' won accolades, will be inducted as a National Icon by the Election Commission (EC).
- The EC appoints prominent Indians as national icons to motivate voters to participate in elections.
- Earlier, the EC recognised actors Pankaj Tripathi and Aamir Khan, and sportspersons such as Sachin Tendulkar, M S Dhoni and M C Mary Kom, as National Icons.

❖ **BPRD to conduct 5G Hackathon “VIMARSH 2023”**

- The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) will conduct a 5G Hackathon VIMARSH 2023 to address the challenges faced by Law Enforcement Agencies.
- The students can submit their ideas between the 1st of November to the 9th of December this year.
- The grand finale of VIMARSH 2023 will be organised on the 28th of February next year.
- The Hackathon will be jointly organised by the Home Ministry, the Department of Telecom and Telecom Centres of Excellence India.
- Nine Problem Statements have been formulated to conduct a Hackathon with students and startups.
- A cash award of one lakh 50 thousand rupees will be given to each winning team.
- The Hackathon will involve three stages of ideas screening - Stages I and 2 will be done in virtual mode whereas Stage -3 in physical mode.

❖ **International Solar Alliance to release ‘Solar Stock-take’ Report**

- The International Solar Alliance (ISA), a coalition of 116 member nations committed to advancing global solar technology adoption, is set to unveil its inaugural ‘global solar stock-take report.’
- This initiative is inspired by the United Nations’ inaugural ‘Global Stock-take’ event, slated for Dubai later this year.
- The ISA is an alliance of more than 121 countries, most of them being sunshine countries, which lie either completely or partly between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. It is headquartered in Gurugram, India.

- The primary objective of the alliance is to work for efficient exploitation of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.
- First-Ever Report: The ISA's 'solar stock-take' report marks a historic endeavor, with its release scheduled for mid-November.
- This report will comprehensively evaluate the strides made by nations in the adoption of solar energy.

❖ Centre approves Rs 22,303 cr subsidy on P&K fertilizers for rabi season

- The Union revised the per kilogramme subsidy under the nutrient-based regime, lowering it for nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, and sulphur for the October-March period compared to the April-September period.
- The cost to the exchequer is estimated at Rs 22,303 crore. Between first half of FY-24 and October to March period, the per kilogram subsidy on nitrogen (N) has gone down by 38%, phosphorus(P) by 49%, potassium(K) by 84% and sulphur (S) by 32% .
- This decision of the government ensures that Indian farmers will continue to receive urea at a highly subsidized price of Rs 266 per bag.
- The rates of complex fertilisers like DAP will be Rs 1,350 per bag, NPK of various grades will average Rs 1470 per bag, and MOP will be Rs 1,655 per bag.
- Notably, MOP rates were around Rs 1,700 per bag in the April-September period.

❖ Hong Kong to introduce own national security law in 2024

- Hong Kong's Chief Executive John Lee announces the semi-autonomous city will create its own national security law in 2024, four years after Beijing imposed sweeping legislation aimed at silencing dissent.
- Massive pro-democracy protests rocked the finance hub in 2019, bringing hundreds of thousands of people to the streets to call for greater freedoms and more autonomy from mainland China.

➤ Beijing imposed a national security law to punish four major crimes secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces with sentences ranging up to life in prison.

➤ The government is pressing ahead to draw up effective legislative options and will complete the legislative exercise in 2024 to fulfil our constitutional duty.

❖ **Qatar sentenced eight Indian ex-Navy officers to death**

➤ A Qatar court announced death penalty for eight retired Indian Navy personnel arrested last year.

➤ In August 30 last year, Qatar's intelligence agency picked up the men from their homes in the dead of night.

➤ They were working for a defence services provider company, Dahra Global Technologies, in Qatar.

➤ Since then, they have been kept in solitary confinement, denied bail, and now sentenced to death.

➤ The Qatari authorities did not specify the reason for the detention to the families of the eight men.

➤ Dahra Global Technologies was involved in the training of Qatari navy.

❖ **Food Labels to have QR Code to Help the Visually Disabled**

➤ The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has recommended the inclusion of QR code on food products for accessibility by visually impaired individuals.

➤ The FSSAI under its Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations 2020 has comprehensively outlined the information to be included on the labels of food products.

➤ The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 recognises the rights and needs of individuals with disabilities.

- It emphasizes on the accessibility and the promotion of health for persons with disabilities.
- One effective means to achieve this on food products is by incorporating Quick Response(QR) codes on product labels.
- These QR codes will have comprehensive details about the products ingredients, nutritional information, allergens, manufacturing date among others.
- **About FSSAI:**
- **Founded:** 5 September 2008
- **Founder:** Anbumani Ramadoss
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi
- **Parent agency:** Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India
- ❖ **Center to introduce DNA and face matching systems at police stations across country**
- More than a year after the Criminal Procedure Identification Act was passed by Parliament, the Centre is all set to roll out 'DNA and face-matching' systems at 1,300 police stations across the country.
- The Indian Parliament passed the Criminal Procedure Identification Act (CrPI), granting police and Central investigating agencies the authority to collect, store, and analyze physical and biological samples, including retina and iris scans of arrested individuals.
- The National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS), managed by the NCRB, has been integrated into the CrPI Act's implementation.
- NAFIS includes fingerprint data for over 1 crore people, including accused and convicts, and is available at around 1,300 police stations across the country.

- A facial recognition system, which is often used to verify individuals through ID verification services, works by identifying and measuring facial features from a given image.
- It may match a human face from a digital image or a video frame against a database of faces.
- The purpose of facial recognition software is to help increase safety and security in various situations.

❖ **NCERT panel recommends replacing 'India' with 'Bharat' in school textbooks**

- 'India' should be replaced with 'Bharat' in the school textbooks for all classes, a high-level committee for social sciences, constituted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to revise the school curriculum.
- The panel has suggested replacing the name 'India' with 'Bharat' in the textbooks, introducing 'classical history' instead of 'ancient history' in the curriculum and including the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) in the syllabus for all subjects.
- The committee has also recommended highlighting 'Hindu victories' in various battles in the textbooks.
- The NCERT is revising the curriculum of the school textbooks in line with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- The council recently constituted a 19-member National Syllabus and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC) to finalise the curriculum, textbooks and learning material for these classes.