

❖ Cabinet approves ratification of HQA between India and CDRI

- Cabinet approves ratification of the Headquarters Agreement (HQA) between India and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).
- The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi approved the ratification of the Headquarters Agreement (HQA) between the Government of India (GoI) and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) signed on August 22, 2022.
- Headquarters grants exemptions, immunities and privileges to CDRI.
- This gives CDRI an independent and international legal personality.

Launch and Objectives of CDRI:

- The CDRI was launched by the Prime Minister of India during the United Nations Climate Action Summit on September 23, 2019.
- CDRI is a major global initiative aimed at climate change and disaster resilience.

❖ Union Cabinet approved PM-PRANAM scheme

- The Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on 28 June approved the PM-PRANAM Scheme.
- The scheme is aimed at incentivizing states to use alternative, non-chemical fertilisers.
- The cabinet also decided to continue the current urea subsidy for three years starting FY23, with an outlay of Rs 3.68 trillion.

About PM-PRANAM Scheme:

➤ The full name of PM PRANAM is Promotion of Alternative Nutrients for Agriculture Management Scheme.

➤ It is to reduce the use of chemical fertilisers.

➤ Reducing the subsidy burden on chemical fertilisers, which is projected to reach Rs 2.25 lakh crore in 2022-23 - 39 per cent more than last year's figure of Rs 1.62 lakh crore.

➤ 70 percent of the grant provided under the scheme can be used for asset creation related to technology adoption of alternative fertilizers and alternative fertilizer production units at village, block and district level.

❖ DoT announces '5G & Beyond Hackathon 2023'

➤ The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has been actively organizing Hackathons to foster the development of 5G products and solutions.

➤ These initiatives have led to the creation of innovative 5G products and solutions across various technological verticals.

➤ In continuation of these efforts, the DoT has announced the commencement of applications for the '5G & Beyond Hackathon 2023' from June 28, 2023.

➤ The primary objective of this hackathon is to identify cutting-edge ideas with a focus on India, which can be transformed into practical and effective 5G and beyond products and solutions.

➤ A total prize pool of Rs one crore will be distributed among one hundred winners of the hackathon.

➤ Additionally, the winners will have the unique opportunity to receive guidance from mentors representing the government, industry, academia, Telcos/OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers), and other relevant stakeholders.

➤ The aim is to promote the exploration of these domains and harness the potential of 5G technology in addressing real-world challenges.

➤ The 5G & Beyond Hackathon is open to individuals, students, start-ups, and academic institutions across India.

❖ Canada launches 'Digital Nomad Strategy' for foreign workers

➤ Canada launched the "Digital Nomad Strategy" to address its skilled labour shortage, particularly in the tech industry.

➤ The strategy aims to attract talented individuals from around the world.

➤ The shortage of skilled workers, particularly in the tech industry, has prompted Canada to take proactive measures.

➤ The announcement was made during Collision's technical conference in Toronto.

➤ The strategy focuses primarily on the technology industry, recognizing its importance in driving innovation and economic growth.

Digital Nomad Strategy:

➤ Foreign workers are allowed to stay in Canada for up to six months under the Digital Nomad Strategy.

➤ If digital nomads receive job offers during their stay, they have the option of extending their time in the country.

➤ The strategy aims to address the shortage of skilled professionals in Canada's tech sector.

➤ Digital nomads can continue their remote working arrangements while living in Canada.

➤ This strategy encourages networking and collaboration between foreign workers, local professionals and Canadian businesses.

❖ UN chief appoints Xu Haoliang of China as deputy head of UNDP

- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has announced the appointment of Xu Haoliang from China as the new Undersecretary-General and Associate Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP).
- Xu Haoliang will succeed Usha Rao-Monari from India in this role.
- Xu has been serving as the UN Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support at the UNDP since 2019.
- Prior to that, from 2013 to 2019, he held the position of UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific.
- He has worked in various capacities within the United Nations, undertaking assignments both in the field and at headquarters in regions such as Asia-Pacific, Europe, and Central Asia.
- Before joining the United Nations, Xu worked in the field of civil engineering in China and the United States.
- His academic qualifications include a bachelor's degree in engineering from Tongji University in China, a master's degree in management science from the Stevens Institute of Technology in the United States, and a master's degree in international affairs from Columbia University.
- Xu is proficient in Chinese, English, and Russian.

❖ **IPS officer Ajay Bhatnagar appointed Special Director in CBI**

- Ajay Bhatnagar, a senior IPS officer of the 1989 batch from Jharkhand cadre, has been appointed as the Special Director in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) as per a Personnel Ministry order.
- Currently serving as Additional Director in the CBI, Bhatnagar will hold the position of Special Director until his superannuation on November 20, 2024.
- Anurag, who was previously Joint Director in the CBI, has been promoted to the role of Additional Director in the agency for a period until July 24, 2023, which completes his seven-year tenure.
- Manoj Sashidhar, a 1994 batch IPS officer from Gujarat cadre, has been appointed as Additional Director in the CBI for a three-year term. He is currently serving as Joint Director in the agency.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has granted an extension in the deputation tenure of Sharad Agarwal, Joint Director of the CBI, for one year beyond May 31, 2023.
- The Central Bureau of Investigation plays a crucial role in tackling high-profile cases, maintaining national security, and upholding the rule of law in India.
- The appointments and extensions in the CBI are part of the ongoing efforts to strengthen the agency's capabilities and ensure its effectiveness in serving the nation's interests.

❖ **TOPS clears Wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia training in Kyrgyzstan and Hungary**

- The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has given its approval to wrestlers Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia for their training proposals under the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS).
- The proposals were submitted by the wrestlers to the Ministry and the TOPS team, and they were cleared within 24 hours of the request.

- Bajrang Punia, an Olympic medalist, will participate in a 36-day training camp in Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan.
- Vinesh Phogat, a medalist in world championships, will first undergo a week of training in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, followed by an 18-day training camp in Hungary.
- Vinesh Phogat will be accompanied by physiotherapist Ashwini Jeevan Patil, sparring partner Sangeeta Phogat, and Coach Sudesh during her training sessions.
- Bajrang Punia will be accompanied by Coach Sujeet Maan, Physiotherapist Anuj Gupta, sparring partner Jitender, and Strength and Conditioning expert Kaazi Hasan.

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

- Union Minister of Mines, Pralhad Joshi on 29th June launched India's inaugural report on Critical Minerals for India.
- The report identifies 30 critical minerals that are crucial for various sectors such as defense, agriculture, energy, pharmaceuticals, and telecom.
- This comprehensive list represents a significant milestone in India's efforts to achieve self-reliance and security in terms of mineral resources.
- The report aligns with India's vision of attaining 'Net Zero' targets, emphasizing the importance of sustainable resource management.
- The purpose of the list is to provide guidance for policy formulation, strategic planning, and investment decisions within the mining sector.
- By identifying critical minerals, India aims to enhance its domestic production capabilities, reduce dependence on imports, and strengthen its mineral security.
- The report's findings will play a vital role in shaping India's mineral resource policies and facilitating long-term sustainability in key sectors of the economy.

❖ Centre provides financial incentives to 12 states for power sector reforms

- The Centre has provided financial incentives of 66,000 crore rupees to 12 states to accelerate power sector reforms.
- These states include Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Manipur and Andhra Pradesh.
- The primary objectives of granting financial incentives for undertaking power sector reforms are to improve operational and economic efficiency within the sector and promote a sustained increase in paid electricity consumption.

❖ Cabinet approves introduction of National Research Foundation Bill

- The Union Cabinet approved the introduction of the National Research Foundation (NRF) Bill, 2023, in parliament.
- Aim: To pave the way to establish NRF that will seed, grow and promote research and development (R&D) and foster a culture of research and innovation throughout India's universities, colleges, research institutions, and R&D laboratories
- The Department of Science and Technology (DST) will be the administrative Department of NRF.

❖ IndiGo becomes India's leading airline to touch ₹1 lakh crore

- InterGlobe Aviation Ltd (Indigo) has become India's leading airline to cross ₹1 trillion in market capitalization.
- The stock hit a 52-week high of ₹2,634.25 on the BSE, with a market value of ₹1.01 trillion.
- Shares of IndiGo settled 3.55% higher at ₹2,619.85 apiece on the BSE, compared to the previous close of ₹2,529.95.
- IndiGo placed an order for 500 Airbus A320 Family aircraft in the largest order in the history of commercial aviation.

❖ Tata AIA partners with WhatsApp, Pay U to introduce premium payment feature

- Tata AIA has partnered with WhatsApp and PayU to make payments through Unified Payment Interfaces (UPI) for their consumers more efficient.
- This feature provides an instant premium payment facility through WhatsApp and UPI-enabled payment options.
- The company has enabled the renewal of premium collections via multiple Digital modes and enhanced its language capability to 5 Languages–English, Hindi, Tamil, Gujarati, and Bengali.

❖ India ranked 67th on Energy Transition Index: WEF

- India bagged the 67th position globally in the World Economic Forum's (WEF) energy transition index.
- WEF informed that India is the only major economy whose energy transition accelerated across all dimensions.
- Top 5: Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Switzerland
- The global energy transition has plateaued amid the global energy crisis and geopolitical volatilities, but India is among the countries that have made significant improvements.