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1. Ministry of Education launched "Yuva Sangam Portal" (Feb. 7, 2023)

"Yuva Sangam Portal" launched at Indira Gandhi Kala Kendra, Delhi **by Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan**, chaired by Sports and Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur, Law and Justice Minister Kiren Rijju, Tourism, Culture and North Eastern Affairs Minister G Kishan Reddy Went.

An overview of the news

- The Ministry of Education has launched a pilot project with the Yuva Sangam portal under Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat.
- **Under the project, 1000 youth in the age group of 18 to 30 years** (300 from North East, 700 from other states) will be sent to youth exchange programs in the North East and other states of the country.
- Through Yuva Sangam, the youth of the North East will get an opportunity to know the tradition, culture, tourist places, food, language and diversity of the eight states of the country and the youth of other states of the country.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat:

- Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat was **announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the year 2015** on the **occasion of Sardar Vallabh Patel's 140th birth anniversary** and was **launched by the Finance Minister in the budget for the financial year 2016-17**.
- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Education.

2. Asia's largest helicopter manufacturing unit inaugurated (Feb. 7, 2023)

The helicopter manufacturing unit of **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) in Tumkuru, Karnataka** has been dedicated to the nation **by Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.

An overview of the news

- It is the **largest helicopter manufacturing facility in Asia**.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had laid the **foundation stone of this manufacturing unit in the year 2016** with an aim to promote the vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.
- **Initially, the Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) will be produced in this helicopter factory**.
- The factory would later be expanded to manufacture Light Combat Helicopter (LCH) and Indian Multirole Helicopter (IMRH) as well as repair LCH, LUH, civil ALH and IMRH.
- This helicopter manufacturing unit is spread over 615 acres, which is by far the largest helicopter manufacturing unit in India.

- This manufacturing unit will **manufacture 30 helicopters per year**, which will be **increased to 90 helicopters per year** in a phased manner.
- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited plans to manufacture over 1,000 helicopters in the 3-15 tonne range with a total turnover of over Rs 4 lakh crore in 20 years.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)

- It was established as Hindustan Aircraft Limited in 1940 by Walchand Hirachand in Bangalore (now Bengaluru), Karnataka.
- The name was changed to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited on 1 October 1964 after it was merged with Aeronautics India Limited by the Government of India.
- Its core business is to design, develop, manufacture, repair and overhaul aircraft, helicopters, engines and related systems such as avionics, instruments and accessories.
- It comes under the Ministry of Defence.
- **Headquarters: Bengaluru**

3. PMAY-U scheme extended up to next year (Feb. 6, 2023)

Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs **Hardeep Singh Puri** said the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) scheme** has been extended up to next year, to complete all the houses sanctioned during the last financial year.

An overview of the news

- Around **123 lakh houses** were sanctioned under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U) during the last financial year, of which **68 lakh houses** were completed till last month.
- The central government has sanctioned **Rs 2 lakh crore** under the scheme, out of which Rs **1.36 lakh crore** has been released so far.
- The survey conducted by the States and Union Territories shows that there is a **demand of 112 lakh houses** under PMAY-U in the country.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban (PMAY-U)

- It was launched on **25 June 2015** by the Government of India and it is being implemented by the **Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**.
- The scheme aims to provide pucca houses to all the eligible beneficiaries **by 2022**.
- Around 1.12 crore houses are to be constructed under the scheme.

4. Rice bran promoted as staple food amid food crisis in China (Feb. 6, 2023)

China has started promoting **rice bran** as a staple food amid the food crisis in the country, as the food crisis remains a significant issue in China from 2020.

An overview of the news

- China's **National Rural Industry Development Plan (2020-2025)** was formulated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs in 2020 to encourage the full utilization of by-products such as rice bran and wheat bran.

Rice Bran

- Rice bran is the brown outer layer of the rice kernel, which is mainly composed of the **pericarp, aleuron, seed coat, and germ.**
- It contains **50% carbohydrate** (starch), 20% fat, 15% protein and 15% dietary fiber (DF), which is mainly insoluble fiber.
- It contains **14-18% oil.**
- Rice bran oil is a good source of unsaturated **fats, vitamin E,** and other important nutrients.
- It is mostly used as **animal feed.**

Why is China focusing on Rice Bran?

- **Global warming** is a major factor contributing to the growing food problem in China, as well as the loss of agriculturally productive land.
- **One-fifth of the world's population** lives in China. Only **11 percent** of the country's land is considered ideal for agriculture.
- The conflict between **Russia and Ukraine** has also had a negative impact on China's food supply system.
- The **Covid-induced disruption** has created an already dire situation on the food front.

5. NTPC hosts international seminar on 'Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage' (Feb. 6, 2023)

NTPC hosts an international seminar on '**Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage' (CCUS)** at First Energy Transitions Working Group meeting in **Bengaluru** under the aegis of G20 India Presidency on 5 February.

An overview of the news

- In India's presidency of G20 the first **Energy Transitions Working Group (ETWG)** meeting was held from 5th February to 7 February 2023.
- CCUS aims to achieve **net zero carbon emissions by 2070.**

- Energy PSUs including NTPC and ONGC are looking to tap the potential of this sector in India.

Outcomes of the seminar

- The “**Carbon Capture, Utilization, and Storage (CCUS) - Technology Gaps and International Collaboration**”, commissioned under the G20 India Presidency, was unveiled.
- **A 3D model of NTPC's flagship project** on Methanol Synthesis from Flue Gas CO₂ was displayed at the event.
- More than **200 dignitaries**, speakers, panellists and delegates from various countries attended the event.

What is Carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS)?

- It is a technology that can capture and effectively utilize high concentrations of **carbon dioxide** emitted by industrial activities.
- This allows the **captured carbon dioxide (CO₂)** to be used in other industrial processes or in the manufacture of consumer products, instead of being stored.

6. India provided 50 buses to Sri Lanka under the economic assistance scheme (Feb. 6, 2023)

India has supplied 50 buses to Sri Lanka on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of independence.

An overview of the news

- Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Gopal Baglay handed over these buses to Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe.
- Commercial vehicle manufacturer **Ashok Leyland** has bagged a **contract for the supply of 500 buses from the Sri Lanka** Transport Board.
- Under the contract, 75 buses have been handed over to Sri Lanka in January 2023. The Indian Import-Export Bank is providing loans for these buses.

About sri lanka

- The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka is a tropical island nation located off the southeast coast of the Indian subcontinent.
- **Sri Lanka is separated from the Indian subcontinent by the Gulf of Munnar and the Palk Strait.**
- Capital: Colombo (Executive and Judicial) and Sri Jayawardenepura (Legislative).

- Official languages: Sinhala and Tamil
- **President - Ranil Wickremesinghe**
- **Prime Minister - Dinesh Gunawardena**
- Currency: Sri Lankan Rupee

7. Pakistan's former President Pervez Musharraf passes away (Feb. 5, 2023)

Pakistan's former President Pervez Musharraf passes away

Pervez Musharraf, former President of Pakistan, passed away after a prolonged illness on 5 February at a hospital in **Dubai**. He was 79.

An overview of the news

- Musharraf was undergoing treatment for a rare disease called **amyloidosis**, which is caused by a build-up of abnormal proteins called **amyloid** in organs and tissues.
- Musharraf was a **four-star general** who ruled Pakistan for nearly a decade after seizing power in a **1999 coup**.
- Musharraf had been in **self-exile** in **Dubai** since **March 2016** facing trial for treason for suspending the constitution in **2007**.
- He was declared a proclaimed offender in the former Prime Minister **Benazir Bhutto** assassination case and the **Lal Masjid Maulvi murder case**.
- Musharraf rose to power following a military takeover of the government in 1999 and became the **tenth President of Pakistan** in June 2001.
- He resigned in **August 2008**, facing possible impeachment.
- Musharraf was born in **New Delhi in 1943**, at the age of four his family moved to Pakistan. His father was employed in the Ministry of External Affairs, while his mother was a teacher.
- He joined the Pakistan Army in 1961, participated in the **Indo-Pakistani Wars of 1965 and 1971**, and was promoted to the rank of Four Star General.
- Musharraf is considered the chief architect of the **Kargil War**, which took place in 1999, soon after India and Pakistan signed the **Lahore Declaration**.
- Musharraf as president came to **Agra in 2001** for a peace summit with Prime Minister **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**, but talks broke down and a treaty was never signed.
- He was allowed to visit Dubai in **2016**.

8. Sri Lanka celebrates 75th Independence Day (Feb. 5, 2023)

Sri Lanka celebrated **75 years of Independence** on 4 February under the theme **Namo Namu Matha - A step towards a century.**

An overview of the news

- The main ceremony of the National Independence Day Celebrations was held at **Galle Face Green in Colombo.**
- A special cultural arts festival **Lankaralanka** was held at Independence square in Colombo.
- The **Jaffna cultural centre** which was built under an Indian grant will also be opened in a few days.
- India's Union Minister of State for External Affairs **V. Muraleedharan** participated in the Independence Day celebrations.
- The Minister held talks with Sri Lankan President **Ranil Wickremesinghe** and Sri Lankan Foreign Affairs Minister **Ali Sabri** and discussed issues of mutual interest.

Sri Lanka Independence Day

- Known as **Ceylon**, Sri Lanka was a major economic center for the **British Empire**, which granted it semi-independent '**dominionship**' status in 1948.
- Sri Lanka became a full-fledged republic on **May 22, 1972**, and is formally known as the **Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.**
- The first Prime Minister of Sri Lanka was **Don Stephen Senanayake**, who is regarded as the **Father of the Nation.**
- In 1972, **William Gopalwa** became the **first President of Sri Lanka.**
- Independence Day is also celebrated by Sri Lankan expatriate communities in other countries including Australia, Canada, Germany, Singapore and the United States.

9. Collegium System: Supreme Court (Feb. 4, 2023)

Collegium System: Supreme Court

5 New Judges to be appointed Soon in the Supreme Court according to the Government of India.

An overview of the news

- The Supreme Court collegium led by Chief Justice of India **D.Y. Chandrachud** on December 13, 2022 recommended the names of five judges for appointment as apex court judges and three for elevation as **Chief Justices (CJ) of High Courts (HC).**

- The five judges recommended to the government for appointment as Supreme Court judges are Rajasthan High Court Chief Justice Pankaj Mithal; Patna High Court Chief Justice Sanjay Karol; Manipur High Court Chief Justice P.V. Sanjay Kumar; Patna High Court judge Justice Ahsanuddin Amanullah; and Allahabad High Court judge Justice Manoj Misra.
- Once the five take oath as judges of the Supreme Court, its working strength will go **up to 32**.
- The sanctioned strength of the top court is 34, including the Chief Justice of India. Its present working strength is 27.

Collegium System in India

- The collegium system in India refers to the process of appointment and transfer of judges in the higher judiciary, which includes the Supreme Court and the High Courts.
- Under this system, a collegium of the Chief Justice of India and **four senior-most judges** of the Supreme Court recommend appointments and transfers to the President of India, who has the power to make the appointments.
- The system was established by a **1993 judgement of the Supreme Court** and has been the subject of controversy and criticism.
- Some have criticized it for lack of transparency and accountability, while others have defended it as necessary to ensure the independence of the judiciary.

National Judicial Appointments Commission

- The National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) was a proposed body in India that was intended to replace the existing collegium system for the appointment and **transfer of judges to the higher judiciary**.
- The NJAC Act was passed by the **Indian Parliament in 2014**, but it was later struck down by the Supreme Court of India in 2015 on the grounds that it violated the basic structure of the Indian Constitution.
- The court held that the NJAC Act sought to undermine the independence of the judiciary and the basic feature of separation of powers between the executive and the judiciary.
- As a result, the collegium system was restored and continues to be used for the appointment of judges to the higher judiciary in India.

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