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1. Ministry of Coal Initiates India's First Underground Coal Gasification Pilot Project in Jharkhand (June 27, 2024)

The Ministry of Coal has initiated India's first pilot project for Underground Coal Gasification (UCG) in Jharkhand.

An Overview of the News

- The project aims to revolutionize the coal industry by converting in-situ coal into valuable gases like methane, hydrogen, carbon monoxide, and carbon dioxide.

Objectives

- Transform economically unviable coal resources through advanced gasification technologies.
- Produce synthetic natural gas, chemical feedstocks, fertilizers, and industrial products from converted gases.

Project Details

- Location: **Kasta coal block, Jamtara District, Jharkhand.**
- Led by Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) in collaboration with CMPDI Ranchi and Ergo Exergy Technologies Inc. (EETI) from Canada.
- Two-year project divided into two phases: feasibility study and pilot-scale gasification.

Phases

- Phase 1 (Started June 22, 2024): Conducting borehole drilling and core testing to prepare a Technical Feasibility Report.
- Phase 2: Implementation of coal gasification at a pilot scale.

Benefits

- Enhances energy security and promotes sustainable development.
- Demonstrates efficient utilization of India's coal reserves, contributing to energy self-reliance.
- Showcases innovative coal gasification technologies tailored to Indian geo-mining conditions.

Strategic Importance

- Aligned with the Ministry of Coal's policy framework for UCG in coal and lignite-bearing areas.

Supported by the CIL R&D Board to foster R&D and innovation in the coal sector.

Future Outlook

- Expected to set new standards in coal resource utilization and pave the way for similar projects in India.
- Aims to establish India as a leader in adopting advanced coal gasification technologies.

2. Kozhikode Named India's First UNESCO 'City of Literature' (June 27, 2024)

On 23rd June 2024, Kozhikode in north Kerala became India's first UNESCO "City of Literature."

An Overview of the News

- PA Mohammed Riyas, Kerala's Tourism Minister, unveiled the UNESCO "City of Literature" logo.
- The "City of Literature" Day of Kozhikode was declared, starting from 2024, to be celebrated annually on 23rd June across Kerala.
- MB Rajesh, from the State Local Self Government Department (LSGD), made this announcement during an official event in Kozhikode.

Background and UNESCO Creative Cities Network:

- On 31st October 2023, Kozhikode and Gwalior were the only Indian cities among 55 cities globally designated in the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN).
- Kozhikode was named UNESCO "City of Literature," while Gwalior was designated UNESCO "City of Music."
- UCCN includes 350 cities from over 100 countries across seven creative fields, including Literature.

About Kozhikode:

- Formerly known as Calicut during British rule, Kozhikode is historically significant as the city of Zamorins.
- It served as a crucial gateway to India for foreigners, including Persians, Arabs, Chinese, and Europeans, notably Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama in 1498.
- Kozhikode boasts over 500 functioning libraries and has been a hub for literary activities, home to renowned Malayalam writer MT Vasudevan Nair.

About UNESCO:

- Director General (DG):- **Audrey Azoulay**
- Headquarters:- **Paris, France**

Established:-**1945**

3. National Consultation on One Health Legal Framework Launched in New Delhi by Dr. V. K. Paul (June 27, 2024)

Dr. V. K. Paul, NITI Aayog Member, inaugurated the 'National Consultation on Legal Environment Assessment for One Health Activities in India' in New Delhi.

An Overview of the News

- The event was also attended by Apurva Chandra, Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Welfare.
- The workshop spanned two days and aimed to evaluate the current legal framework concerning One Health activities in India.
- Key objectives included identifying strengths, gaps, and overlaps in existing laws and regulations affecting One Health initiatives.
- Dr. Rajiv Mani from the Ministry of Law and Justice, Leena Nandan from the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, and Isabelle Tschan, UNDP India Representative, were among the notable attendees and stakeholders.

Overview of One Health Approach:

- One Health emphasizes the interconnectedness of human health, animal health, and the environment.
- It has gained significance due to increased interactions between people, animals, plants, and the environment.

Factors Contributing to One Health Importance:

- Population Dynamics: Growing human populations are expanding into new areas, increasing contact with wild and domestic animals.
- Role of Animals: Animals serve multiple roles such as food, companionship, and economic livelihoods, fostering close human-animal interactions.
- Environmental Changes: Climate change, deforestation, and intensive farming alter landscapes, creating new opportunities for disease transmission among animals and humans.
- Globalization: Increased travel and trade facilitate rapid spread of diseases across borders and continents.

Impact of Zoonotic Diseases:

- Zoonotic diseases, which transfer between animals and humans, pose significant global health challenges.
- Examples include rabies, West Nile virus, Ebola, and various bacterial infections like Salmonella and Brucellosis.

- Animals can serve as early indicators of potential human health threats, as seen with diseases like West Nile virus.

Collaborative One Health Approach:

- Involves collaboration among experts from various fields such as disease control specialists, veterinarians, physicians, and environmental scientists.
- Aims to enhance the health of both humans and animals, including pets, livestock, and wildlife.
- Focuses on integrated efforts across human, animal, and environmental health to prevent and mitigate disease outbreaks.

4. Hunar Indian folk and tribal art exhibition opens in Dubai (June 27, 2024)

The Dubai Art Centre, a prominent and long-standing art institution, is hosting the "Hunar" exhibition.

An Overview of the News

- The exhibition showcases a captivating display of Indian folk and tribal art.
- Each piece offers a glimpse into the soul of Indian traditions.
- Cultural Highlights
- It highlights the rich cultural heritage of India's folk and tribal art forms.

Artistic Styles Featured

- Visitors can explore various artistic styles from across India, including:
 - Aipan Art from Uttarakhand
 - Madhubani Art from Bihar
 - Warli Art from Maharashtra
 - Vibrant Murals from Kerala
 - Intricate Muria Art from Chhattisgarh

Unique Opportunity for Art Enthusiasts

- The "Hunar" exhibition provides a unique opportunity for art enthusiasts in Dubai to immerse themselves in the diverse world of Indian folk and tribal art.
- Attendees can experience firsthand the cultural richness and artistic heritage of India.

About United Arab Emirates (UAE)

- Location: It is located in Western Asia.

- Geographical Boundaries: It shares borders with Oman and Saudi Arabia.
- Maritime Borders: It also has maritime borders with Qatar and Iran in the Persian Gulf.
- Religion: Islam is the dominant religion in the UAE, with the majority of the population being Sunni Muslim.
 - Capital - **Abu Dhabi**
 - Official language - **Arabic**
 - President/Crown Prince - **Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**
 - Prime Minister - **Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**
 - Vice President - **Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum and Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan**

5. Dr. Jitendra Singh Launches 'One Week One Theme' Campaign (June 26, 2024)

On June 24, 2024, Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, GoI, launched the "One Week One Theme" (OWOT) campaign.

An Overview of the News

- The campaign aims to showcase India's achievements in science and technology through weekly themes.

About OWOT Campaign

- Initiative Background: Inspired by the success of "**One Week One Lab**" (OWOL) in 2023.
- Objective: **Raise awareness about scientific progress, promote innovation inclusivity.**

MoUs and Collaborations

- Technology Transfers: Signed around 24 MoUs for technology transfers and product launches.
- Stakeholder Empowerment: Aimed at empowering MSMEs, startups, SHGs, scientists through industry collaborations.

Key Themes

- Diverse Themes: Included energy devices, aerospace, agriculture, healthcare, ecology, and more.
- Empowerment Goals: Focus on improving ease of living through science and technology innovations.

Future Directions

- Agenda for 2025: Transition to "**One Week One Integrated Theme**" (OWIT).
- Economic Impact: Projects like Deep-Sea mission, Aroma mission, and advancements in technology to boost India's economy, aiming for 4th largest globally.

About CSIR

- The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is an autonomous body founded in 1942.
- It is India's largest publicly funded multi-disciplinary Research & Development (R&D) organization.
- CSIR operates under the administrative supervision of the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), Government of India.
 - President - **Prime Minister Narendra Modi.**
 - Director General - **N. Kalaiselvi**
 - Headquarters - **New Delhi.**

6. New Criminal Laws Set to Take Effect on 1st of Next Month (June 26, 2024)

Three new criminal laws, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam, 2023, will come into effect from the 1st of next month.

An Overview of the News

- These laws were passed during the winter session of Parliament last year and aim to empower Indian citizens by creating a more accessible and efficient justice system.
- **Key provisions include:**
 - Reporting incidents online.
 - Allowing FIR filing at any police station and providing victims with a free copy of the FIR.
 - Allowing individuals the right to inform a chosen person upon arrest.
 - Prioritizing investigations of offences against women and children to be completed within two months.
- Forensic experts must visit crime scenes for serious offences to collect evidence.
- Summons can now be served electronically, reducing paperwork and facilitating efficient communication.
- The government has collaborated with States and Union Territories to ensure readiness through technology, capacity building, and awareness.

- The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) has updated the Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks and Systems (CCTNS) application with 23 functional modifications to support the new laws.

7. Paraguay Joins International Solar Alliance as 100th Full Member (June 26, 2024)

Paraguay has achieved full membership status in the International Solar Alliance, marking its entry as the 100th country to join.

An Overview of the News

- The External Affairs Ministry confirmed this development, noting that Paraguay submitted its Instrument of Ratification.
- Ambassador Fleming Raul Duarte of Paraguay met with Abhishek Singh, the Head of Depository and Joint Secretary in the Ministry, during a meeting in New Delhi on June 26th.
- On 23 May 2024, Spain joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA) as the 99th member, reaffirming its commitment to the solar energy initiative.

About International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- Formation: Established on **30 November 2015 in Paris, France.**
- Purpose: Unite over 120 nations, primarily within the Tropics, to promote solar energy and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.
- Headquarters: Located at the **National Institute of Solar Energy in Gurugram, Haryana, India.**
- Director General: Led by **Dr. Ajay Mathur**, the alliance fosters clean energy, sustainability, public transport, and climate initiatives.

About Paraguay

- Paraguay, a landlocked nation, is situated between **Argentina, Brazil, and Bolivia.**
- It features extensive areas of swampland, subtropical forests, and chaco, which are wild expanses of savanna and scrubland.
 - Capital:- **Asunción**
 - Official languages:- **Paraguayan Guaraní, Spanish**
 - President:- **Santiago Peña**
 - Continent:- **South America**

8. India's First Global Centre for Enterprise Risk Management Established at Sri Sri University, Odisha (June 25, 2024)

Institute of Risk Management (IRM) India Affiliate has granted license to Sri Sri University (SSU), Odisha to set up India's first Global Centre for Enterprise Risk Management (ERM).

An Overview of the News

- The agreement was formalized at the Art of Living International Centre in Bengaluru, Karnataka.
- The primary objective is to create a safer environment across East India through partnerships with local organizations and governmental bodies.
- Focus areas include disaster risks, safety, cyber risk management, women and child safety, and financial risks.

Educational and Training Opportunities

- SSU students gain access to IRM's global resources and training programs.
- The curriculum emphasizes risk-informed business leadership, entrepreneurship, and corporate management skills.

Community Impact and Networking

- The partnership strengthens networking and continuous learning opportunities within the IRM India community.
- It aims to cultivate a pool of over 10,000 certified risk-intelligent professionals, contributing to resilient and sustainable business practices.

Significance and Global Perspective

- Located in East India, this initiative marks a significant milestone as the region's sole global center for ERM.
- IRM, headquartered in the UK, is renowned globally for its ERM certifications and memberships, spanning various levels from foundational to advanced.

9. Wärtsilä Unveils World's First Large-Scale 100% Hydrogen-Ready Engine Power Plant (June 21, 2024)

Wärtsilä Oyj Abp, a Finland-based company, has launched the world's first large-scale 100% hydrogen-ready engine power plant to support net-zero power systems.

An Overview of the News

- The Wärtsilä 31 is a highly efficient medium-speed 4-stroke marine engine that:
 - Synchronises with the grid within 30 seconds from the start command.

- Ensures energy security through fuel flexibility.
- Offers unparalleled load-following capabilities and high part-load efficiency.
- The engine can run on natural gas and 25% hydrogen (H2) by volume blends.
- It has completed over 1 million running hours with more than 1,000 MegaWatt (MW) installed capacity globally.
- The hydrogen-ready engine power plant concept is certified by TÜV SÜD (Technischer Überwachungsverein - Technical Inspection Association).
- The H2-Readiness certification includes three stages with three corresponding certificates.
- Wärtsilä has achieved the first stage with a Concept Certificate for the engine power plant's conceptual design.
- The 100% hydrogen-ready engine is expected to be available for orders in 2025 and for delivery from 2026.

About Finland

- It is a northern European nation.
- It shares borders with Sweden, Norway and Russia.
- Finland's arctic Lapland province is famous for the Northern Lights, a spectacular natural phenomenon.
- Lapland is a vast wilderness area with national parks and ski resorts, making it a popular destination.
 - Capital - **Helsinki**
 - Helsinki is situated on a peninsula and is surrounded by islands in the Baltic Sea.
 - President - **Alexander Stubb**
 - Prime Minister - **Petteri Orpo**
 - Currency- **Euro**
 - **Nokia company is from Finland.**

10. Ukraine Launches World's First Unmanned Systems Forces (June 20, 2024)

Ukraine has established the world's first stand-alone military branch solely dedicated to unmanned systems, known as the Unmanned Systems Forces (USF).

An Overview of the News

- The USF was officially launched by the Ukrainian Armed Forces and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Objectives of USF:

- USF aims to enhance capabilities in unmanned and robotic warfare across air, sea, and ground domains during combat operations.
- It focuses on advancing the development and deployment of unmanned systems for military purposes.

Leadership and Command:

- Colonel Vadym Sukharevsky, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, has been appointed as the inaugural Commander of the USF.
- He will lead the strategic direction and operational readiness of the USF.

Symbolism:

- The symbol representing the USF is a "**steel swallow**," which was designed by a neural network.
- The swallow holds cultural significance in Ukrainian tradition as a symbol of victory.

Functions and Responsibilities:

- The USF is responsible for providing operational units with drones and ensuring their logistical support.
- It oversees the recruitment and training of specialists in unmanned systems.
- It plays a crucial role in planning and executing military operations that involve unmanned technologies.