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1. CM MK Stalin launches construction of South East Asia's largest desalination plant at Perur, Chennai (Aug. 23, 2023)

Chief Minister MK Stalin inaugurated the Rs 4,276.44 crore desalination plant at Perur on 21 August 2023.

An Overview of the News

- Development of Southeast Asia's largest desalination plant begins.

- Funding is provided by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

- The project covers 85.51 acres of land, which is targeted to be completed by 2026.

Innovative Water Treatment Technologies:

- Advanced Methods: Dissolved Air Flotation and Dual Media Filtration.

- High-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipelines extend up to 1,150 meters into the sea.

- 59 km long drinking water pipeline up to Porur area.

Augmentation of water supply and distribution:

- Enhanced supply: 400 MLD additional water after completion of the plant.

- To meet the water needs of: 22.67 lakh people in Chennai and surrounding areas.

- Beneficiary Areas: **Chennai, Tambaram, Kovilanchery, Perumbakkam, Kolappakkam, Vandalur.**

Desalination Plant Network of Chennai:

- Fourth desalination facility for the water demands of Chennai.

- Inaugurated Plant: 100 MLD Capacity, Minjur, July 31, 2010.

- Nemmeli Desalination Plant: 100 MLD, foundation stone laid on 23 February 2010.

- Ongoing construction: 150 MLD desalination plant at Nemmeli.

Publicity and Communication:

- CMWSSB made a video to highlight the characteristics of plants.

- Video shared with a wide consumer base for information dissemination.

2. Assam's International Airport Becomes 1st Airport In Northeast India To Launch 'Digi Yatra' Facility (Aug. 23, 2023)

Guwahati's popular **Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport (LBBI)** has become the first airport in Northeast India to launch a 'Digi Yatra' facility.

An Overview of the News

- The innovative service aims **to enhance the air travel experience in the region by streamlining airport processes.**

Cooperation and Objectives:

- The 'Digi Yatra' initiative is a collaboration with the Ministry of Civil Aviation with the goal of modernizing and improving air travel.

- It aims to revolutionize passenger navigation through airports, making it more intuitive and convenient.

Major Areas of Implementation:

- The 'Digi Yatra' service has been implemented in three main areas of the airport: entry points, check-in counters, and boarding zones.

- Traditional long queues and delays during check-in and security procedures are expected to come down significantly.

Facial Recognition Technology:

- The core of the 'Digi Yatra initiative is the use of facial recognition technology for seamless airport travel.

- This eliminates the need for traditional methods of ticket verification and ID checking.

Security and Privacy Measures:

- Passenger data is encrypted and stored in the passenger's smartphone wallet, ensuring privacy.

- No personally identifiable information (PII) is stored during the process.

- Industries and Commerce Minister of Assam - **Chandra Mohan Patowary**

About Assam:

- It is a state located in the northeastern region of India. It is bounded by Bhutan in the north, Arunachal Pradesh in the east, Nagaland in the northeast, Manipur in the southeast, Mizoram in the south, and West Bengal in the west.

- Formation (as a state) - **26 January 1950**

- Capital - Dispur

- Chief Minister - **Himanta Biswa Sarma**

- Governor - **Gulab Chand Kataria**

3. Srinagar's Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden enters the record books with 1.5 million flowers (Aug. 21, 2023)

Srinagar's-Indira-Gandhi-Memorial-Tulip-Garden-enters-the-record-books-with-1.5-million-flowers
The Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, located at the foothills of the beautiful Zabarwan Range, earned recognition in the World Book of Records as the largest and most stunning park of its kind in Asia.

An Overview of the News

- The garden features an impressive **array of 1.5 million flowers in bloom,** a remarkable testament to the beauty and **diversity of the natural world.**

- **Recognition by World Book:** Santosh Shukla, President & CEO, of World Book officially certified the achievement and presented the recognition to Fayaz Shaikh, Secretary, of Floriculture, Gardens, and Parks.

- **Diverse Tulip Collection:** With a collection of 68 distinct varieties of tulips, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden is a spectacle of colors and shapes. Each tulip variety brings its own unique character, with shades ranging from delicate pastels to vibrant, eye-catching colors.

- **Efforts of the Gardeners and Botanists**: The careful selection of flowers in the garden highlights the dedicated work of the gardeners and botanists who have worked tirelessly to develop this breathtaking display of nature's wonders.

- **Inspired by Ghulam Nabi Azad:** The origin of the garden is linked to the visionary thoughts of Ghulam Nabi Azad, former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. He conceived the idea of a natural haven that would showcase the region's diverse flora. The garden was carefully developed in less than two years, involving many laborers and gardeners.

- **A Spectrum of Colours:** A walk across the vast landscape of the garden offers visitors a stunning display of colors that engages the senses and evokes emotion. The color of the garden ranges from serene white and soft pink to fiery red and passionate purple, providing an intense experience beyond the ordinary.

4. Parliament passed the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (Aug. 1, 2023)

Parliament-passed-the-Cinematograph-(Amendment)-Bill,-2023
The Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2023 was recently passed by the Parliament after approval from the Lok Sabha. It is a historic moment as the Cinematograph Act is being amended after a gap of 40 years, with the last significant changes being made in 1984.

An Overview of the News

- The primary objective of the Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill is to combat film piracy in a big way, as it is causing an estimated loss of Rs 20,000 crore to the film industry.

- The government wants to protect and promote the growth of the film industry, in line with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who sees India as a global content hub.

Measures to Curb Piracy

- The bill introduces strict penalties for piracy-related offences to deter unauthorized recording, exhibition, and transmission of films, including online piracy.

- Offenders will face a minimum imprisonment of 3 months and a fine of Rs. 3 lakhs, with the possibility of extended imprisonment up to 3 years and a fine of up to 5% of the audited gross production cost.

Empowerment of Film Industry

- The bill eliminates the need to renew a film's licence every 10 years, making the licence valid for a lifetime.

- This move streamlines the licensing process and reduces bureaucratic hurdles for filmmakers.

Improved Film Certification Process

- Age-Based Certification: The bill introduces age-based categories for film certification, dividing the existing UA category into three age groups: seven years (UA 7+), thirteen years (UA 13+), and sixteen years (UA 16+).

- These age markers are meant for parental guidance to help determine suitable content for children.

Alignment with Supreme Court Judgements

- The bill aligns the law with relevant Supreme Court judgments and other legislations, providing a consistent legal framework for the film industry.

Perpetual Validity of Certificates

- Certificates issued by the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) will now be valid perpetually, removing the previous 10-year restriction.

TV Broadcast and Recertification

- Only films under the Unrestricted Public Exhibition category can be shown on television.

- Films intended for television broadcast will require recertification of edited versions.

5. UNESCO urges global ban on smartphones in schools to promote human-centred education approach (July 30, 2023)

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) published its 2023 Global Education Monitoring Report titled **"Technology in Education: A Tool on**

Whose Terms", which supports a worldwide ban on smartphones in schools where technology integration Does not improve learning outcomes.

An Overview of the News

- UNESCO advocates a more "human-centred approach" to education and highlights the need to reduce reliance on digital technology.

- Excessive use of smartphones has negative effects on children's academic performance and emotional competence.

- UNESCO's Manos Antoninis raised concerns about data leaks in educational technology, revealing that only 16 percent of countries have laws guaranteeing data privacy in the classroom.

- The shift to online-only learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the loss of approximately 500 million students worldwide.

- The report emphasises that the right to education is increasingly linked to meaningful connectivity. One in four primary schools do not have access to electricity, making it important to set standards for connecting schools to the Internet.

- The survey conducted by UNESCO reveals that only 11 out of 51 governments have implemented a curriculum for artificial intelligence (AI) in schools.

About UNESCO

- The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN)

- It is also a member of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UN SDG), a coalition of United Nations agencies and organisations that aims to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Headquarters:- **Paris, France**

- Director General: -**Audrey Azoulay**

- Founded:- **16 November 1945 in London, United Kingdom**

- The organisation has -**193 members and 11 associate members**

6. Kerala to set up India's first fisheries Atal Incubation Centre (July 29, 2023)

Kerala-to-set-up-India's-first-fisheries-Atal-Incubation-Centre
After receiving a grant of ₹10 crore from NITI Aayog, the Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS) will set up India's first Atal Incubation Center (AIC) in fisheries.

An Overview of the News

- NITI Aayog, as the premier policy think tank of the Government of India, provided a grant to KUFOS to promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the fisheries sector.

* The AIC initiative is part of the Atal Innovation Mission, which aims **to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship across various industries in the country.**

Fisheries Atal Incubation Centre:

* Fisheries Atal Incubation Centre will act as a focal point to foster innovation and inspire young individuals to create advanced technologies and solutions that will address challenges faced by our marine ecosystem and fishing communities .

* Its primary objective is **to promote progress in the fisheries industry by providing a supportive and encouraging environment for startups and innovative initiatives within the sector.**

* The centre will play a key role in creating employment opportunities, creating a conducive environment for startups and entrepreneurs to flourish and succeed.

Vice Chancellor of KUFOS - T. Pradeepkumar

About Kerala

Capital - **Thiruvananthapuram**

Official Bird - **Great Hornbill**

Governor - **Arif Mohammad Khan**

Chief Minister - **Pinarayi Vijayan**

Origin of rivers in Kerala

* Periyar River

* Bharathapuzha River

* Pamba River

* Chaliyar River

* Chalakudy River

India's longest lake - Vembanad, Kerala

7. Naveen Patnaik holds the record for being India's second longest serving chief minister (July 29, 2023)

Naveen-Patnaik-holds-the-record-for-being-India's-second-longest-serving-chief-minister Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik holds the distinction of being the second longest serving Chief Minister in India.

An Overview of the News

- **Patnaik held the office of Chief Minister** for an impressive period of **23 years and 138 days, assuming office on 5 March 2000.**

- In achieving this feat, he surpassed the previous record holder, former **Chief Minister of West Bengal Jyoti Basu, who served for 23 years and 137 days from June 21, 1977 to November 5, 2000.**

- **The title of longest-serving Chief Minister is held by former Chief Minister of Sikkim, Pawan Kumar Chamling,** who held the post for an even longer period of **24 years and 166 days.**

- Patnaik's journey in politics has been remarkable, and his turning point came when he was called on to lead the newly formed Biju Janata Dal on 17 April 1997, following the death of his father, former Chief Minister of Odisha, Biju Patnaik.

- He began his political journey by winning the election from the Aska Lok Sabha constituency in his home district of Ganjam, marking the beginning of his successful leadership tenure.

Naveen Patnaik:

- **In 1998, Naveen Patnaik joined the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government at the Center as the Minister of Steel and Mines**. However, he later decided to return to the state and contest the assembly elections in 2000.

- Under the leadership of **Naveen Patnaik, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) has achieved an impressive record of being undefeated in all elections including Lok Sabha, Assembly and Panchayat elections.**

- In 2000, Naveen Patnaik successfully formed a coalition government with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Odisha and became the **14th Chief Minister of the state on 5 March.**

- One of the most significant challenges Naveen Patnaik faced was in **2009 when communal violence in Kandhamal ended his alliance with the BJP.**

- In 2012, Naveen Patnaik faced an alleged political coup attempt organised by his advisor Pyari Mohan Mohapatra, which he successfully foiled.

8. India's first online gaming academy launched in Madhya Pradesh (July 29, 2023)

India's-first-online-gaming-academy-launched-in-Madhya-Pradesh
Madhya Pradesh is launching its first online gaming industry "MP State Esports Academy".

An Overview of the News

- The Academy aims to provide a platform for aspiring gaming and esports professionals to advance their skills and reach a professional level.

MP Junior Esports Championship

- "MP Junior Esports Championship" is a 10-day talent hunt tournament from 27th July to 7th August.

- It is exclusively for e-sports enthusiasts in the age group of 12 to 17 years.

- The tournament provides a platform for young participants to engage, compete and showcase their gaming skills.

Inclusive Selection Procedure

- 80% seats in the academy are reserved for gamers from Madhya Pradesh.

- The remaining 20% seats are open to enthusiastic gamers from across India.

- The selection process is open to all, giving a fair chance to the participants to compete for admission.

Combination of tradition and innovation

- MP State Esports Academy aims to promote the sport represented in the Asian Games and Olympics.

- It seeks to integrate traditional and modern sports while providing opportunities in both emerging esports and traditional sports.

Government Sponsored Excellence

- Selected eSports athletes will receive 12 months of intensive coaching and high-quality eSports education.

- The coaching and education is fully funded by the government, with an aim to nurture and groom talented sportspersons.

Exports in India: Growing Recognition and Growth Projections

- With its inclusion as a medal sport in the Asian Games 2022 and a pilot program in the Commonwealth Games 2022, eSports is gaining recognition in India.

- The gaming industry in India is expected to grow four-fold to reach Rs 1,100 crore by 2025.

- India's potential as a lucrative market for eSports has attracted major gaming companies from around the world.

- Due to its increasing popularity, global players are looking for opportunities and investing in Indian e-sports.

Sports minister of Madhya Pradesh: Yashodhara Raje Scindia

9. Rajasthan issues first transgender birth certificate to Noor Shekhawat (July 28, 2023)

Noor Shekhawat, a transgender person, received the **first transgender birth certificate in Rajasthan**. His previous birth certificate listed his gender as male.

An Overview of the News

- The birth certificate was presented to Noor Shekhawat by the municipal and state government officials. **The certificate reflects her gender identity as transgender, which is an important milestone.**

- Director of the Economics and Statistics Department and Chief Registrar (Birth and Death) Bhanwarlal Bairwa released the historic transgender birth certificate in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

- Going forward, the records of males and females as well as birth records of transgender persons will be included in the corporation's portal. An awareness program will also be launched to encourage other transgender persons to apply for their birth certificates.

- Noor Shekhawat, who completed her education till class 12 in an English medium school, is actively involved in running an NGO that supports the transgender community.

About Rajasthan

- It is a state in northern India and is the largest Indian state by area and the seventh largest by population.

- It is bordered by five other Indian states: Punjab to the north; Haryana and Uttar Pradesh in the northeast; Madhya Pradesh in the southeast; and Gujarat in the southwest.

- Rajasthan is also home to three national tiger reserves, Ranthambore National Park in Sawai Madhopur, Sariska Tiger Reserve in Alwar and Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve in Kota.

Formation **- 30 March 1949**

Capital- **Jaipur**

District - **33 (7 Circle)**

Governor - **Kalraj Mishra**

Chief Minister - **Ashok Gehlot (INC)**

Legislative Assembly - **Rajasthan Legislative Assembly (200 seats)**

Rajya Sabha - **10 seats**

Lok Sabha - **25 seats**

10. Cinematograph Amendment Bill 2023 introduced in Rajya Sabha (July 24, 2023)

Cinematograph-Amendment-Bill-2023-introduced-in-Rajya-Sabha
Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur introduced the Cinematograph Amendment Bill 2023 in the Rajya Sabha to deal with film piracy.

Corporate Address: A102, A Block, Sector 58, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301

An Overview of the News

- The primary objective of the Cinematograph Amendment Bill is to tackle film piracy, which has been a significant concern for the Indian film industry.

- A report by Ernst & Young states that the Indian film industry suffered a huge loss of around Rs 18,000 crore in 2019 due to piracy.

- In response to alarming piracy rates, the Indian government took action by proposing amendments to the existing Cinematograph Bill 1952.

- The Cinematograph Bill 1952 is responsible for overseeing the certification and exhibition of films in India.

- The proposed amendments are aimed **at strengthening the regulatory framework and enhancing measures against film piracy.**

About Piracy

It is the unauthorized copying, distribution or exhibition of films without the consent of the rights holders, which poses a significant challenge by affecting the revenue and overall quality of the Indian film industry.

Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill 2023:

- The Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill 2023 was introduced to effectively deal with the issue of piracy.

- One of the key provisions of the Bill is to reclassify films on the basis of age groups instead of the existing system of 'U', 'A' or 'UA'. The proposed classification includes "UA-7+", "UA-13+" and "UA-16+", replacing the existing "UA-12" category.

- The main objective behind the recategorization is to establish consistency in categorizing movies and content across different platforms.

- The Bill, once enacted, would recognize theft as a legal offence, leading to stricter punishment for those responsible. Punishment for piracy will now include three years' imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10 lakh.

Indian Cinematograph Bill 1952:

- The Indian Cinematograph Bill of 1952 established censor boards in various cities, which were later reorganized as the Central Board of Film Censors and renamed the Central Board of Film Certification in 1983.

- The primary objective of the Cinematograph Bill 1952 is **to provide for a certification procedure for cinematograph films intended for public exhibition and to regulate such exhibitions.**

- The Cinematograph Bill 1952 also included the screening of film titles. Titles depicting excessive violence, obscene language, obscenity, contempt of court, insult to national symbols, or misrepresentation of personality or religion are prohibited.