

Daily News Decode

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India slips two spots on 17th Sustainable Development Goals report



- India's rank has slipped by two places from last year to 117 on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted as a part of the 2030 agenda by 193 United Nations member states in 2015.
- India ranks below four South Asian countries: Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.
- The State of India's Environment Report 2021 revealed that India's rank was 115 last year and dropped by two places primarily because of major challenges like ending hunger and achieving food security (SDG 2), achieving gender equality (SDG 5) and building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation (SDG 9) remain in the country.

India Launches Global Energy Initiative "Mission Innovation CleanTech Exchange"



- The Governments of 23 nations, including India, have collectively launched a bold new plan called Mission Innovation 2.0, to catalyze action and spearhead a decade of innovation for global investment in clean energy research, development and demonstrations.
- Mission Innovation 2.0 is the second phase of the global Mission Innovation initiative, launched alongside the Paris Agreement at the 2015 COP21 conference.
- The new initiative was launched at the Innovating to Net Zero Summit, hosted by Chile.
- The purpose is to make clean energy affordable, attractive and accessible throughout this decade; To accelerate action towards the Paris Agreement; and Net-zero pathways.
- Under this new MI 2.0, a series of new Missions will be undertaken, which will be supported by a new global Innovation Platform to strengthen confidence and awareness in emerging innovations and maximize the impact of national investments.
- As a part of this Platform, India has launched the Mission Innovation CleanTech Exchange, to create a network of incubators across member countries.

- The network will provide access to the expertise and market insights needed to support new technologies to access new markets globally.

‘Knowledge Economy Mission’



- Kerala government has launched ‘Knowledge Economy Mission’ to boost job prospects in the state by supporting knowledge workers.
- The initiative was announced in State Budget on June 4.
- It was being spearheaded by Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC) and they will submit a comprehensive project report before July 15.
- The project will be launched to bring ongoing efforts of providing employment to educated people and support ‘knowledge workers’ under a single programme.
- A plan will be made to provide basic facilities and social security system for knowledge workers who are working close to their homes and interacting with employers.
- For implementation and funding purposes, a ‘knowledge economy fund’ will be created.
- In order to promote skills & strengthen the higher education system and for technological transformation, the knowledge economy fund was hiked from ₹200 crore to ₹300 crores.

GREEN RAILWAYS



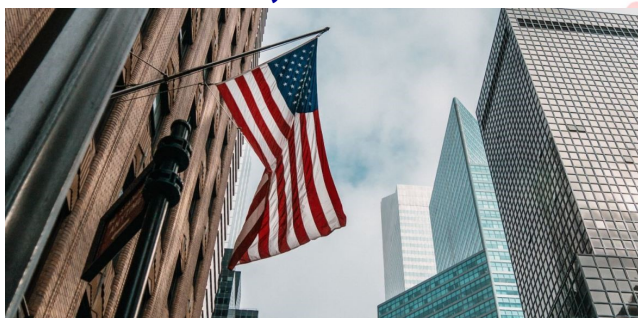
- Indian Railways (IR) is working in mission mode to become the “largest Green Railways” in the world and is moving towards becoming a “net zero carbon emitter” before 2030.
- Railway Electrification which is environment friendly and reduces pollution, has increased nearly ten times since 2014.
- Railways has planned to electrify balance Broad Gauge (BG) routes by December, 2023 to achieve 100% electrification of BG routes.
- Green certification: 19 Railway Stations have also achieved Green Certification including 3 Platinum, 6 Gold and 6 Silver ratings.
- 27 Railway Buildings, Offices, Campuses and other establishments are also Green certified.
- Green certification mainly covers assessment of parameters having direct bearing on the environment, such as, energy conservation measures, use of renewable energy, Green House Gas emission reduction, water conservation, waste management, material conservation, recycling etc.

NATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL PRICING AUTHORITY (NPPA)



- COVID pandemic has resulted in recent volatility in Maximum Retail Prices (MRP) of Oxygen Concentrators.
- Margin at the level of distributor currently ranges up to 198%. Thus, the Government has decided to step-in to regulate the price of Oxygen Concentrators.
- By invoking extraordinary powers under Para 19 of the DPCO, 2013, NPPA has capped the Trade Margin up to 70% on Price to Distributor (PTD) level on Oxygen Concentrators.
- Earlier, in February 2019 NPPA had successfully capped the Trade Margin on Anti-cancer Drugs.

EAGLE Act, 2021



- A legislation that aims to remove the country cap for permanent residency visas was recently introduced in the US House of Representatives.
- It would have to be passed through the House of Representatives and the Senate, and then signed by the President of the United States for it to become a law.
- The Equal Access to Green cards for Legal Employment (EAGLE) Act of 2021 allows American employers to focus on hiring immigrants based on their merit, not their birthplace.
- The new law helps Indians who are not able to get green cards due to the country caps and the lottery system in the US.
- The act seeks to remove the seven percent cap for each country for employment-based immigrant visas.
- The seven per cent limit which was introduced in the mid-20th century, has led countries with relatively small populations to be allocated the same number of visas as a relatively large-population country.
- The per-country limit on family-sponsored visas will also be raised from 7 percent to 15 percent.
- The act aims for the limitations to be removed in a phased manner over the next 9 years.
- However, the act won't allow domination by Chinese and Indian visa applicants as it would put in reserve visas for a period of nine years for 'Lower Admission States'.
- It will ensure that "no country may receive more than 25 percent of reserved visas and 85 percent of unreserved visas" in the nine fiscal years.
- A similar Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act (HR1044) was passed by the House of Representatives in July 2019. Another version of the bill – S386 was passed by the Senate in the 116th session of the Congress.

Green gold collection for bamboo products



- The Green Gold Collection, a dedicated window for bamboo products was launched by the Union Minister of State for Agriculture
- This window is the result of collaborative work between the National Bamboo Mission and the Government e-Marketplace (GeM).
- The dedicated window will provide an electronic platform for the small manufacturers and niche sellers thereby vastly increasing their reach to attract buyers and at the same time will provide niche products from trusted sources to the buyers.
- This window showcases a range of exquisitely handcrafted bamboo and bamboo products, handicrafts, disposals and office utility products on the GeM portal.
- It aims to provide bamboo artisans, weavers and entrepreneurs in rural areas with market access to Government buyers.
- Product categories ranging from bamboo poles to bamboo products in furniture, lifestyle & décor, kitchenware, industrial machinery, handcrafted items such as toys and office utility items like agarbatti/ incense sticks, disposables, water bottles, yoga mats, charcoal, etc. are being uploaded on the portal for Government buyers.
- This initiative seeks to promote the adoption and use of bamboo products among Government buyers and usher a sustainable rural economy for an Atmanirbhar Bharat.

Blue-finned Mahseer



- The Blue-finned Mahseer has been moved to the 'least concern' status from 'endangered' of the IUCN red list.
- The golden mahseer is still in danger of going extinct.
- Mahseer fish belongs to the genus Tor of family Cyprinidae (carps).
- It thrives in clear rivers and lakes of India and southeastern Asia, and among the largest of Indian river fishes.
- They are commercially important game fish, as well as highly esteemed food fish.
- They are potential candidate species for aquaculture.
- It is very sensitive to dissolved oxygen levels, water temperature and sudden climatic changes, hence an important indicator of freshwater ecosystems.
- They are omnivorous, eating not only algae, crustaceans, insects, frogs, and other fish, but also fruits that fall from trees overhead.
- The first species from this group were scientifically described by Francis Buchanan-Hamilton in 1822.

- The following sub species of Mahseer are generally recognized by scientists in India:
- “Golden Mahseer” or Tor Putitora found in the Himalayan streams and rivers.
- “Blue Fin / Deccan Mahseer” or Tor Khudree found in rivers of the Deccan Plateau.
- “Red Finned Mahseer” or Tor Tor found in the rivers of central India.
- “Chocolate Mahseer” or Neolissochilus hexagonolepis, found in the Indian Himalayan region.
- “Humpback Mahseer ” or Tor remadevii found in the Cauvery River and its tributaries, largest of all the subspecies.

I-Familia:



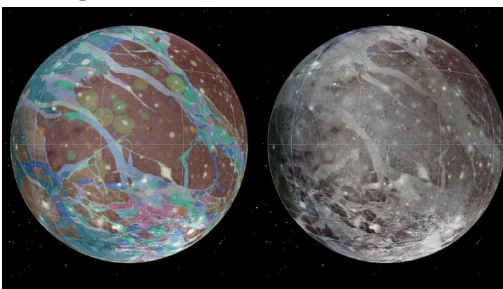
- It is a Global database to identify missing persons.
- Launched by Interpol.
- It can identify missing persons through family DNA and help the police solve cold cases in member countries.

OLED skin display to detect & display heartbeat made: Samsung



- Samsung has announced researchers have developed an OLED 'skin' display, with a built-in heartbeat sensor, that can be stretched by up to 30%.
- The device was tested by attaching it to the inner wrist near the radial artery.
- The device picked a heartbeat signal that was 2.4 times stronger than what would be picked up by a fixed silicon sensor.

NASA's Juno to make closest visit to Jupiter's Ganymede in 20 yrs



- NASA's Juno spacecraft will come within 1,038 kilometres of Jupiter's moon Ganymede's surface on June 7.
- This would be the closest a spacecraft has come to it since Galileo spacecraft in May 2000.
- From JunoCam's viewpoint, Ganymede will go from being a point of light to a viewable disk then back to a point of light in about 25 minutes.

Gujarat launches cow research centre to promote use of cow dung, urine



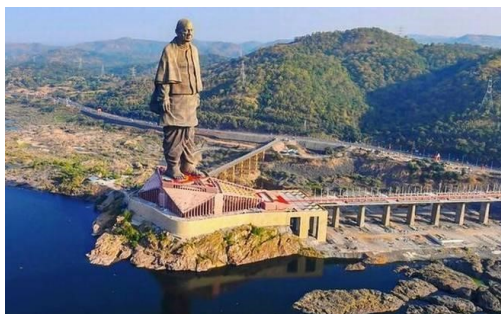
- Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat has virtually inaugurated a cow research centre (Gau Anusandhan Unit) at the Gujarat Technological University to promote use of cow milk, urine and dung by establishing science-based research.
- The centre was launched under Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog (RKA).
- RKA is an advisory body set up by Centre to develop programmes for the conservation of indigenous cow breeds.

Russia officially withdraws from Open Skies arms control treaty



- Russian President Vladimir Putin signed into law Russia's departure from the Open Skies arms control treaty after the US quit the pact last year.
- The pact allows unarmed surveillance flights over member countries.
- The US decision to withdraw from the treaty had "significantly upset the balance of interests" among member states and had compelled Russia to exit, the Kremlin said.

India's 1st EVs-only zone to be at Statue of Unity: SOUADTGA



- The Statue of Unity Area Development and Tourism Governance Authority (SOUADTGA) has said it will develop India's "first electric vehicles-only area" in the area surrounding the Statue of Unity.
- In the area, only EVs will be allowed to run along with buses running on battery power for tourists.
- Locals will be provided assistance to purchase a three-wheeled e-vehicle.

Tech to predict movement of impurities via soil made: IIT Mandi



- IIT Mandi researchers have co-developed software which they claim accurately predicts the movement of contaminants through complex soil structure.
- It's especially useful in estimating fertiliser application in agricultural fields and designing disposal mechanisms for complex chemicals.
- The model can be used in planning and designing landfill and groundwater remediation sites.

Sharks went nearly extinct 19 million years ago: Study



- A study has revealed sharks nearly went extinct 19 million years ago when over 90% of the world's sharks died, Yale University reported.
- It was twice the level of extinction that sharks experienced during the Cretaceous-Paleogene extinction event 66 million years ago.
- There is no known climate calamity or ecosystem disruption that occurred at the time of the steep drop.

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