

NATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

Cheese Plant at Palanpur, Gujarat

- Inauguration of a **cheese plant** and **whey drying plant** at Palanpur to celebrate the **Golden Jubilee year of the Banaskantha Cooperative Milk Producers Union (Banas Dairy)** at Deesa in Gujarat

Indian Air Force personnel cannot keep beard: SC

- The Supreme Court bench informed that Indian Air Force (IAF) officers **do not carry beard**.
- The regulations do not interfere with religious rights of individuals and that they have the sanctity of ensuring discipline.

Union Cabinet approves MoU between Rural Development Ministry & FAO

- The MoU aims to improve effectiveness of rural development programs in India and facilitate knowledge sharing by exchange of visits and dialogue for knowledge and experience sharing.
- It will facilitate South-South cooperation mechanisms around Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)'s experience.
- It will strengthen vertical upscaling of livelihoods of rural populations supported by DAY-NRLM, develop inclusive and sustainable value chains for key crops and agro-industrial products.
- It will also facilitate employment diversification, skills development for rural youth, strengthen social protection, risk management mechanisms.
- It will also provide collaboration to support an integrated approach to rural poverty reduction through activities aimed to promote economic empowerment of rural women, access of rural poor to natural resources and their sustainable use and social protection.

Major Port Trust Authorities Bill, 2016 to give autonomy to 12 major ports

- The Bill is more compact in comparison to Major Port Trusts Act, 1963. It has reduced number of sections to 65 from 134 by eliminating obsolete and overlapping Sections of previous Act.
- The bill aims to empower 12 major ports to perform with greater efficiency on account of full autonomy in decision-making.
- Board of Port Authority: It has been delegated full powers to enter into contracts, planning and development, fixing of tariff.

India's approach to climate change negotiations at COP22 to UNFCCC approved

- The approval aims to safeguard interest of poor and vulnerable groups by laying stress on adaptation, damage and loss while protecting the development space.
- It seeks to address the adaptation needs of the country to combat the ill-effects of climate change and also enables the achievement of developmental goal.
- The approach incorporates the interest of all strata of society in the country.

MoU between ISRO and USGS approved

- This MoU signed in July 2016 will enable ISRO to receive USGS's Landsat-7 and 8 in India. It will also allow USGS to receive ISRO's Resourcesat-2 (AWiFS and LISS III) data of US region.

MoU between India-Kyrgyzstan on agriculture cooperation approved

- It includes exchange of information and experience in field of research, animal breeding, Avian Influenza and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), veterinary medicine.
- Also covers exchange of information in plant growing, production of seeds based on modern technology, certification of seed and different types of irrigation.
- Also provides cooperation in the field of protection of plant variety rights; agricultural, food trade and horticulture, food safety and standards; aquaculture and fisheries, etc.
- Provides constitution of a Joint Working Group (JWG) comprising of representatives from both countries.
- JWG will prepare plans of cooperation, provide solutions to problems arising during implementation of this agreement and implementation of tasks.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENT AFFAIRS

India Tops Innovation Destination in Asia, 3rd in World

- **India** has emerged as the **tops** most country in **Asia** for **innovation**. It is the **third** biggest country globally for innovation.
- **Bengaluru**, which is 5th largest hub at global level, saw most of the innovations in 2016 including opening of 3 new centres between March and October 2016, apart from setting up of startup accelerator by Apple.
- **9** new innovation centres were opened in India in 2016, leading the total number of innovation centres to **25**.
- **Jaipur, Pune and Hyderabad** each experienced opening of two new centres. The four cities accounts for **27% of Asia's** new innovation centres.
- The **US** leads the list of global innovators with 146 centres, followed by **Britain** with 29 and India is at third place with 24 centres.

BUSINESS & ECONOMY

Work Bank cancelled \$100 million loan to Pakistan

- World Bank has cancelled a \$100 million loan to Pakistan for a natural gas efficiency project which to be carried out by Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC)

AWARDS

Madonna's biopic, *Blond Ambition*, voted as best unproduced script of 2016

- Madonna's biopic, titled **Blond Ambition**, has been named the most admired unproduced film script of 2016 in the Hollywood system
- The biopic describes the struggle of Madonna of 1980s to get her first album released.

19 Metre Highest Ever Wave Sets World Record

- **United Nations World Meteorological Organization** on December 13, 2016, announced that a **19-metre-high (62.3 ft) wave** in the **North Atlantic Ocean** has set a world record for being the highest-ever measured by a buoy.
- The wave crushed the previous record of 18.275 meters (59.96ft) wave measured in December 2007 in the North Atlantic.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Pakistan Successfully Test Fires Babur Cruise Missile

- **Pakistan Army** successfully test-fired an enhanced version of an indigenously-designed cruise missile '**Babur**'
- It incorporates advanced aerodynamics and avionics that can hit targets at **700 kms** both at land and sea with high accuracy.
- It is a low flying, terrain hugging missile, which carries certain stealth features and is capable to carry various types of warheads.

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

Mutated fish becomes 8,000 times more resistant to toxic waste discovered in US

- The small striped '**mud minnow**', or **killifish**, is known for living in heavily polluted estuaries such as New Jersey's Newark Bay and Virginia's Elizabeth River.
- The mix of dioxins, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB), and heavy metals in these sites were anywhere up to **8,000 times** the level that would make most killifish die.

Desert National Park records 11 Great Indian Bustard in Rajasthan

- **Desert National Park (DNP)** in Jaisalmer has records the successful birth of 11 Great Indian Bustards or **Godawn** which is the state bird of Rajasthan
- Rajasthan government has started "**Project Godawan**" for its conservation.

- The number of critically endangered species Godawn now increases to 151. Remaining 140 birds are founded in **Dehradun Wildlife Institute of India**.

www.AmbitionIAS.com