

News Digest

NATIONAL

Scientific Effort is Fruitful only if Change is Visible "From Research to Real Life": PM

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has said that efforts of science can turn into great achievements only when they come out of the lab and reach the land, and their impact reaches from "global to grassroots", when its ambit is from "journal to jameen" and when change is visible "from research to real life". He was addressing the 108th Indian Science Congress via video conference. The PM was of the opinion that increasing participation of women in extramural research and development is proof that women and science are both progressing in the nation. The PM emphasised the importance of data gathering and analysis in advancing scientific research and the need for an institutional framework to support the progression of science and encourage young people to pursue careers in the field.

Govt Issues Guidelines Enabling Institutions to Offer Technical Textiles Degree Programmes

The Ministry of Textiles has approved two guidelines for the National Technical Textiles Mission. The first guideline pertains to the enabling of academic institutions to offer technical textiles degree programs and updating existing programs with technical textiles coursework. Institutions may receive grants of up to Rs. 20 Crore for introducing a full-time postgraduate program in technical textiles and Rs. 10 Crore for an undergraduate program. The second guideline, the General Guidelines for Grant for Internship Support in Technical Textiles (GIST), involves the empanelment of eligible companies and the implementation of internships. Grants of up to Rs. 20,000 per student per month will be provided to empaneled companies for a maximum of two months to support internships for engineering students.

Captain Shiva Chauhan Becomes First Woman Army Officer Deployed to Siachen Glacier

For the first time, a female officer from the Indian Army has been deployed to the Siachen Glacier. Captain Shiva Chauhan has been deployed at the Kumar Post of Siachen Glacier, located at an altitude of 15,600 feet after undergoing rigorous training. Located in the Karakoram range in the Himalayas, Siachen Glacier at the height of around 20,000 feet is known as the highest militarised zone in the world.




National Green Hydrogen Mission Gets Cabinet Nod

The Union Cabinet has approved the National Green Hydrogen Mission, with a budget of Rs. 19,744 Crore. The project aims to increase the country's green hydrogen production capacity to 5 million metric tons per year, with an associated renewable energy capacity of 125 GW. The mission, which will run until 2030, is expected to create over 600,000 jobs and result in Rs. 8 Lakh Crore of investment. It is also expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50 million metric tons per year, while creating export opportunities and cutting India's reliance on fossil fuels.

 **Rs.17,490 crore** for SIGHT programme

 **Rs.1,466 crore** for pilot projects

 **Rs.400 crore** for R&D

 **Rs.388 crore** towards other mission components

Rs 2,539.61 Crore Plan Approved for Public Sector Broadcasting Upgrade

The Union Cabinet has approved a Rs. 2,539.61 Crore plan to upgrade the country's public broadcaster Prasar Bharati's infrastructure, as part of the Central Sector Scheme "Broadcasting Infrastructure and Network Development" (BIND). The BIND scheme will allow Prasar Bharati to improve its facilities and widen its reach, including in the LWE (Left Wing Extremism), border and strategic areas, as well as provide high-quality content for both domestic and international audiences. In addition, Doordarshan and All India Radio studios will be upgraded to be HD-ready. The project has the potential to generate employment in the manufacturing of broadcast equipment and DD Free Dish DTH boxes, as well as in the content production sector.

UGC Issues Draft Regulations for Operation of Foreign Universities in India

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has released draft regulations that aim to regulate the entry and operations of foreign universities in India offering degrees, diplomas, and certificate programs. The draft has been made available to the public for comments and feedback, with a deadline of the 18th January 2023. According to the draft regulations, foreign higher education institutions (FHEIs) must obtain approval from the UGC before setting up campuses in India. In addition, foreign universities must be ranked within the top 500 of global subject-wise rankings as determined by the UGC. A standing committee will review applications by foreign universities considering factors such as the credibility of the institution, the programs being offered, and the proposed academic infrastructure.

Stage Set for India to Host First Y20 Summit

Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Shri Anurag Singh Thakur, on 8th January 2023, launched the themes, logo and website for the Y20 Summit India. The Y20 is the official youth engagement group for the G20 (Group of 20) and India is hosting the summit for the first time. The summit's key focus is to bring young leaders from all across the globe



together and discuss ideas for a better tomorrow and draft an agenda for action. For the next 8 months, there will be pre-summits on the five Y20 themes along with various discussions and seminars at different Universities across states in India in a run up to the final summit.

INTERNATIONAL

TTP Challenges Pakistan's Sovereignty, Declares Own Government

The TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan) has unilaterally declared the formation of its own government, including a Cabinet, in a direct challenge to Pakistan's sovereignty. The group has divided itself into various ministries, including defense, intelligence, and education, and has declared two provinces in areas where it has presence or contested control. The TTP, also known as the "Student Movement of Pakistan," is an umbrella organisation of militant groups fighting against the Pakistani military. Its goals include the removal of Pakistan's influence in certain regions and the implementation of a strict interpretation of Islamic law across the country. TTP leaders have also stated that they aim to establish an Islamic caliphate in Pakistan, which would involve overthrowing the current government.

IMF Chief Warns of "Tough Year" for Global Economy

Kristalina Georgieva, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has stated that the economies of the United States, Europe, and China are all slowing down at the same time. This could make 2023 a tough year for the global economy, as these three regions are major drivers of global growth. In October 2022, the IMF had revised its outlook for global economic growth in 2023 due to ongoing conflicts in Ukraine, inflation pressures, and higher interest rates implemented by central banks like the US Federal Reserve to address these price pressures. Since then, China has abandoned its zero-Covid policy and attempted to restart its economy, although consumers there are concerned about the rising number of coronavirus cases.



ECONOMY

Cabinet Approves Rs. 12,882 Cr Budget for NER Development Scheme Extension

The Union Cabinet has approved the continuation of schemes from the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) for the remainder of the 15th Finance Commission's term, which runs from 2022-23 to 2025-26. The budget for these schemes is Rs. 12,882 Crore. Of this, Rs. 8,139 Crore has been allocated to the North East Special Infrastructure Scheme, while Rs. 3,202 Crore has been allocated to the "Schemes of North Eastern Council" and Rs. 1,540 Crore has been allocated to the Special Packages for the Bodoland Territorial Council, Dima Hasao Autonomous Territorial Council, and Karbi Anglong Autonomous Territorial Council. The purpose of these schemes is to support the development and welfare efforts of the eight states of the North Eastern region by funding infrastructure and social sector projects and increasing livelihood and employment opportunities.

ADB Sanctions US\$ 1220 Million Loan for Various Infra Projects in India

Government of India has signed several loan agreements with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to boost infrastructure in the country. According to the Finance Ministry, one of these agreements is worth US\$ 350 Million and will be used to improve connectivity in Maharashtra. Another agreement, worth US\$ 300 Million will be utilised to upgrade over 300 kilometers of state highways and major district roads in Assam. Additionally, the two sides have signed a US\$ 220 Million loan agreement to improve energy security, quality of supply, efficiency, and resilience in the power sector in Tripura. A separate loan agreement worth US\$ 350 Million was also signed on 3rd January 2023 to build new lines and improve the connectivity of the metro rail system in Chennai.



SPORTS

Koneru Humpy Wins India's First FIDE World Blitz Silver

Former World Rapid Champion Koneru Humpy produced a superlative performance to claim India's first-ever silver medal from the FIDE World Blitz Chess Championship that concluded in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Humpy defeated China's Zhongyi Tan to win Silver in the 17th and final round. Fourth-seeded Humpy scored an impressive 12.5 points, just half a point behind the gold medal winner Bisarala Balabayeva of Kazakhstan. Humpy is the second Indian to win a medal at World Blitz, after Viswanathan Anand.



(Source: AIR/PIB)