

IACE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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DESCRIPTIVE

❖ **India, Russia explore accepting RuPay and Mir cards for easy payments**

- India and Russia have agreed to explore the possibility of accepting each other's payment cards, RuPay (India) and Mir (Russia).
- Reason: For hassle-free payments between the two countries
- This decision was made during the meeting of the Internal Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological, and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC).
- This meeting was chaired by the External Affairs Minister of India S Jaishankar and Russia's Deputy PM Denis Manturov.

❖ **India's manufacturing PMI at 4-month high in April on output**

- According to the monthly survey, Manufacturing activities in India have been accelerated further and touched a four-month high in April 2023.
- Reason: Boosted by robust new business growth, mild price pressures, better international sales, and improving supply-chain conditions
- The S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) has been increased from 56.4 (March 2023) to 57.2 (April 2023).
- It reflecting a robust and quicker expansion in new orders.

❖ NITI Aayog released “Best Practices in Social Sector: A Compendium, 2023”

- NITI Aayog has released the “Best Practices in Social Sector: A Compendium, 2023” in collaboration with the UNDP.
- Reason: To commemorate 75 years of India’s independence and highlight and laud the efforts of Union Ministries and State Governments.
- This compendium includes 75 case studies cutting across 14 key social sectors.
- The aim of this exercise is to synthesize lessons for the future to expand, enhance and improve life at the grassroots level.

❖ Australia announced Government Grant for Project in Kargil

- For the first time in the history of Ladakh, the Australian High Commission in India has announced its Government Grant for a Project in Kargil.
- This was announced during a Special Meeting at Srinagar chaired by the Australian high commissioner to India, Barry O'Farrell.
- The project "Return to Roots" aims to integrate traditional knowledge with the current school science curriculum in alignment with the goals of the National Education Policy (NEP).

❖ First test launch of new low-cost star sensor successfully conducted

- A new low-cost star sensor, named ‘StarBerrySense’, developed by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) from off-the-shelf components, has started functioning properly in its first test launch.
- It was put into space by ISRO’s PSLV C-55.
- Function: Quickly and accurately calculate where a satellite is pointing in space as for any space mission
- The star sensor can find its pointing direction in space by identifying the stars in its field of view.

❖ **DRDO & Indian Navy conduct successful test of Air Droppable Container 'ADC-150'**

- DRDO and Indian Navy conducted the successful maiden test trial of 'ADC-150' from IL 38SD aircraft, Goa.
- It is an indigenously designed and developed Air Droppable Container with a 150 kg payload capacity.
- The trial was conducted to enhance the naval operational logistics capabilities by providing quick responses to meet the requirement of critical engineering stores to ships.
- It reduces the requirement for ships to come close to the coast to collect spares and stores.

❖ **Qantas names Vanessa Hudson as next CEO**

- Australia's flagship carrier, Qantas has named its finance chief Vanessa Hudson as its new chief executive officer, making her the first woman to lead the airline.
- She will succeed Alan Joyce, who will retire in November 2023.
- She has been market-facing as CFO since October 2019.
- She had held several senior roles there, including chief customer officer and senior vice president for the Americas and New Zealand.

❖ **India surpasses Australia to become No. 1 Test team**

- Rohit Sharma-led India overtook Australia to become the number one Test team in the latest rankings released by the International Cricket Council (ICC).
- Australia's reign at the top of the men's Test rankings ended after 15 months, with India surpassing the Aussies ahead of next month's ICC World Test Championship (WTC) final.
- India is currently on top with 121 points, while Australia are second with 116 points.

➤ Earlier this year, India registered a 2-1 series win against Australia to retain the Border-Gavaskar trophy for the fourth time in a row.

➤ England (116 points), South Africa (104) and defending champions New Zealand (100) occupy the third, fourth and fifth places respectively in the rankings.

❖ **World Press Freedom Day 2023 observed on 3rd May**

➤ Every year on May 3, we observe World Press Freedom Day to increase understanding about the significance of a press that is free and not influenced by external forces. The occasion emphasizes the importance of unrestricted journalism and advocates for the fundamental right of freedom of speech.

➤ This year's World Press Freedom Day focuses on the theme of "Shaping a Future of Rights: Freedom of Expression as a Driver for All Other Human Rights," which emphasizes the critical role of freedom of expression in safeguarding and promoting other human rights.

➤ The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed an international day for press freedom 30 years ago, and to celebrate this milestone, UNESCO organized a special anniversary event at the UN headquarters in New York.

➤ The anniversary edition of World Press Freedom Day included a full day of events at the UN Headquarters on May 2nd.

❖ **Three jailed Iranian women journalists win UN press freedom prizes**

➤ The United Nations announced that its premier prize for press freedom has been awarded to three imprisoned Iranian female journalists "for their commitment to truth and accountability."

➤ Award winners include Niloufer Hamidi, Elaheh Mohammadi and Nargis Mohammadi.

➤ Neelofer had informed people about 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, who had died in September last year, through a news item.

➤ Amini was arrested by the ethics police for not wearing a headscarf properly.

➤ Elaheh wrote about Amini's funeral. Amini's death triggered months of protests in Iran's cities.

➤ The third winner, Nargis Mohammadi, worked for many years as a journalist and is one of Iran's most prominent activists.

❖ Luca Brecel wins snooker World Championship title

➤ Luca Brecel, the 28-year-old Belgian snooker player, has claimed his first world title after defeating Mark Selby in a thrilling final at the Crucible in Sheffield.

➤ The match went down to the wire, with Selby putting up a strong fight back to push Brecel to the brink. However, Brecel held his nerve and eventually prevailed with an 18-15 victory.

➤ Brecel's victory also meant he joined Canadian Cliff Thorburn (1980), the Republic of Ireland's Ken Doherty (1997) and Australian Neil Robertson (2010) as only the fourth modern-era world champion from outside the United Kingdom at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre.

➤ Brecel was first in come the next frame and then demonstrated excellent cue-ball control around the black in a match-winning break of 112.

❖ World Bank to provide 2.25 billion dollars to Bangladesh

➤ The World Bank will provide financial aid of 2.25 billion dollars to Bangladesh for five projects

1. Accelerating transport and trade connectivity in Eastern South Asia worth \$753.45 million

2. USD 500 million for Resilient Infrastructure Building Project

3. USD 500 million First Bangladesh Green and Climate Resilient Development

4. USD 250 million Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation

5. USD 250 million Bangladesh Environmental Sustainability and Transformation.

❖ **Bharti Airtel to merge Sri Lanka operations with Dialog Axiata**

- Bharti Airtel has signed a binding agreement to merge its Sri Lankan unit into market leader Dialog Axiata through a stock deal which will create a stronger number one in the country.
- With this merger, Bharti Airtel will get access to a large customer base in Sri Lanka.
- Bharti Airtel started its operations in 2009 in Sri Lanka and has a customer base of 1 million in the country.
- Dialog Axiata is a subsidiary of Malaysian Axiata.
- Dialog accounts for 57% of the mobile market in Sri Lanka.

❖ **India's unemployment rate at a four-month high in April 2023**

- India's unemployment rate climbed to a four-month high, the latest data showed, as there were more people joining the workforce compared to available jobs in Asia's third largest economy.
- Creating enough jobs for India's burgeoning population will remain a key challenge for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, especially as he looks to a third term in office in national elections due next summer.
- The nationwide joblessness rate rose to 8.11% in April from 7.8% in March, the highest since December. Urban unemployment climbed to 9.81% from 8.51% in the same period while in the rural areas, it fell marginally to 7.34% in April from 7.47% a month ago.
- India's labor force increased by 25.5 million people to 467.6 million in April, possibly due to "increase in optimism about finding employment," taking the labour participation rate to 41.98% in April, the highest in three years.
- About 87% of this expanded labor force were able to secure employment as an additional 22.1 million jobs were created in the month. The employment rate rose to 38.57% in April, highest since March 2020.

❖ **India slips in World Press Freedom Index, ranks 161 out of 180 countries**

- India's ranking in the global Press Freedom Index 2023 has slipped to 161 out of 180 countries, which is down 11 places from 150th place in 2022.
- According to the latest ranking released by the Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF), or Reporters Without Borders, India is clubbed with countries with some of the worst human rights and press freedom record such as, Bangladesh (163), Russia (164), Turkey (165) Saudi Arabia (170), Iran (177). China (179) and North Korea (180) round up the list of countries with least amount of media freedom.
- The 2023 edition of the report was released on May 3, which is marked as the World Press Freedom Day.
- According to RSF, the ranking is based on five indicators that capture the essence of press freedom. These include parameters such as: political context, legal framework, economic context, socio cultural context, and safety of journalists.
- India's rankings on social indicator is 143, on legislative indicator is 144, on economic indicator is 155, on political indicator is 169 and on security indicator is 172.