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❖ **MoS for Communications launched ORAN test bed project**

➤ On the occasion of World Telecom Day, Minister of State for Communications Devusinh Chauhan today launched Open Radio Access Network (ORAN) test bed project for conformance, certification and interoperability testing of ORAN based solutions at a function in New Delhi.

➤ It will facilitate testing of ORAN elements and will facilitate development of fully indigenous 5G radio network in India.

➤ The Minister also released a Postal Stamp to mark the glorious 20 Years of Universal Service Obligation Fund of Ministry of Communications. It provides telecom facilities in rural and remote areas of the country.

➤ On the occasion of World Telecom Day, Mr Chauhan also inaugurated the exhibition, showcasing the innovations in Telecom sector. This will facilitate development of fully indigenous telecom solutions for the citizens.

❖ **UNEP suggests measures to reduce 80% of world's plastic pollution by 2040**

➤ Plastic pollution across the world can see a reduction of up to 80 per cent by 2040 if companies and countries make policy and market shifts using existing technologies, said United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

➤ The report "Turning Off The Tap" was released ahead of the negotiations resuming in Paris seeking a global agreement to beat plastic pollution.

➤ The report highlights the magnitude and nature of changes required to end plastic pollution and to create a circular economy to replace the widespread use of single-use plastics and their inappropriate disposal.

- Plastic pollution undermines marine ecosystems and contaminates oceans. The presence of microplastics – tiny fragments resulting from the disposal and breakdown of consumer products and industrial waste – are increasingly found in the human food chain.
- According to the report, one million plastic bottles are purchased every minute while up to five trillion plastic bags are used worldwide every year. In total, half of all plastic produced is designed for single-use purposes, the UNEP confirms. About 400 million tonnes of plastic waste are generated every year.
- To reduce the problem of unnecessary plastics, the report suggests tackling the problem with the approach of 'reuse, recycle and reorient and diversify products.'

❖ **Online education program 'Pahal' for rural children inaugurated**

- The online rural education initiative 'Pahal' was officially launched by Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra at Government UP Sainik Inter College in Sarojini Nagar.
- This program, developed through a partnership between the Department of Secondary Education and IIT Kanpur, aims to provide education to rural communities through online platforms.
- In the initial phase of the program, 10 government secondary schools in the state will offer free online education as part of the 'Pahal' initiative.
- The online classes will provide students from rural areas with up-to-date knowledge in the fields of science and mathematics. As part of the event, the rural online education program was launched in 10 government schools in Uttar Pradesh.
- In the near future, this service will be extended to 40,000 schools across the state. Emphasizing the importance of skill, scale, and speed, Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra mentioned that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has advocated for these principles.

❖ **BJP Ambala MP Rattan Lal Kataria passes away**

- Former Union minister and the BJP's Ambala MP Rattan Lal Kataria passed away at 71.
- He has served as minister of state in the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment from May 2019 till July 2021.
- He was elected to the Lok Sabha from Ambala in 1999, 2014, and 2019.
- He also served as the party's Haryana unit chief from 2000 to 2003.
- He was also a minister in the Haryana government.

❖ **G20's RIIG Conference on Scientific Challenges and Opportunities**

- G20 Research and Innovation Initiative Gathering (RIIG) Conference on Scientific challenges and opportunities for sustainable blue economy at Diu.
- The main theme of RIIG during India's G-20 Presidency in 2023 is "Research and Innovation for an Equitable Society".
- The four priority areas of RIIG under India's G20 Presidency are i) Materials for Sustainable Energy; ii) Circular bio-economy; iii) Eco-Innovations for Energy Transition; and iv) Scientific Challenges and Opportunities for a Sustainable Blue Economy.
- Dr Srivari Chandrasekhar, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST), Govt. of India and the G20 RIIG Chair, Chaired the meeting.
- This G20 RIIG conference is being coordinated by Ministry of Earth Sciences, Govt. of India.
- Over 35 foreign delegates and 40 Indian experts, delegates and invitees were participated in the conference. Dr M Ravichandran, Secretary MoES shall coordinate the proceedings of the RIIG Conference.

❖ India bags 16 gold medals at the South Asian Youth Table Tennis Championship 2023

- The three-day international event South Asian Youth Table Tennis Championship 2023 concluded in Itanagar.
- In this event more than 100 athletes from six countries Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Nepal participated.
- Arunachal Pradesh Governor, Lt. General KT Parnaik, (Retd.) attended the closing ceremony as Chief Guest at Dorjee Khandu Indoor Stadium, Itanagar.
- The hosts India won all the gold medals on offer on the last day at the Dorjee Khandu Indoor Stadium.
- Besides, the Indians also bagged four silver medals in the singles. Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Maldives were also among the medals, while Bhutan, who participated only in the singles events, drew a blank.
- On the second day of the championships, the Indians won three gold medals in the U-15 Boys, U-19 Girls and U15 Girls, while Nepal claimed the U-19 Boys gold.
- In the Under-19 Boys singles, Ankur Bhattacharjee defeated Payas Jain 4-2 to claim the gold.

❖ Ruskin Bond wrote a new book titled 'The Golden Years'

- Indian author Ruskin Bond wrote a book titled "The Golden Years: The Many Joys of Living a Good Long Life".
- The Golden Years book is published by HarperCollins India and released on 19 May 2023, Bond's 89th birthday.
- "The Golden Years" focuses on Bond's experiences during the 60s, 70s and 80s. He was born on 19 May 1934 in Kasauli, Punjab States Agency, British India.
- His first book, "The Room on the Roof", was written when he was 17 and featured the semi-autobiographical character Rusty.

➤ In 1992, Bond received the Sahitya Akademi Award for his work "Our Tree Still Grows in Dehra".

➤ He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1999 and the Padma Bhushan in 2014 for his contribution to literature and education.

❖ Madhya Pradesh cabinet approves 'Mukhya Mantri Sikho Kamao Yojana' for unemployed youth

➤ The Madhya Pradesh cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, approved the 'Mukhya Mantri Sikho Kamao Yojana' for unemployed youth.

➤ It was decided in the meeting that the name of Mukhya Mantri Kaushal Kamai Yojana will be 'Mukhyamantri Sikho-Kamao Yojana' (Chief Minister Learn-Earn Scheme).

➤ Under the scheme, at least one lakh youths will be provided training in establishments. All the youth who have done 12th pass, ITI, Diploma, Graduation and Post Graduation will be eligible for this scheme.

➤ After the training, the State Council for Vocational Training (SCVT) certificate will be given by the Madhya Pradesh State Skill Development and Employment Generation Board (MPSSDEGB).

➤ Prestigious industrial and private institutions of the country and the state will be connected with the scheme. Establishments will be able to train student trainees up to 15 percent of their total workforce.

➤ Under the scheme, youth will be taught work and in return they will be given stipend by the government.

➤ Under the scheme, 12th passed trainees will be given 8 thousand rupees, ITI passed 8 thousand 500 rupees, diploma passed 9 thousand rupees and graduate passed or higher educational qualification will be given 10 thousand rupees per month stipend.

❖ **UK announces sanctions on Russian diamonds and metals ahead of the G7 meeting in Japan**

- The United Kingdom has announced sanctions on the military-industrial complex and metals as well as Russian diamonds in a new round of sanctions ahead of the G7 meeting in Japan.
- The ban specifically covers imports of copper, aluminium and nickel of Russian origin.
- In addition to trade sanctions, the UK is targeting 86 members of Russia's military-industrial complex and individuals involved in key industries such as energy, metals and shipping.
- The UK government aims to crack down on sanctions violations and target those who aid the Kremlin in undermining the effect of existing sanctions.

❖ **Defence production crosses Rs. 1 lakh crore mark for the first time ever**

- The value of defense production in the financial year (FY) 2022-23 has crossed the Rs. one lakh crore mark for the first time.
- The value is currently Rs. 1,06,800 crore and may increase further once data is received from the remaining private defense industries.
- The present value of defense production in FY 2022-23 is over 12 per cent higher than Rs. 95,000 crore in FY 2021-22.
- Government's efforts to boost defense production: Simplified defence industrial licensing, relaxation of export controls and grant of No Objection Certificate.
- Specific incentives introduced under the foreign trade policy. Defence Production & Export Promotion Policy 2020.
- The government had issued two "positive indigenization lists" which included 209 items that could not be imported.

- The government has also announced two dedicated corridors in Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh to act as clusters of defense manufacturing.
- The number of defense licenses issued by the government to industries has increased by almost 200 per cent in the last 7-8 years.
- These measures have given a boost to the defense industrial manufacturing ecosystem in the country and have generated tremendous employment opportunities.