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Current Affairs

22 August, 2024

Amardeep Singh Bhatia Appointed as DPIIT Secretary



1. Amardeep Singh Bhatia Appointed as DPIIT Secretary

Amardeep Singh Bhatia, a 1993-batch IAS officer from the Nagaland cadre, has officially assumed the role of Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). He succeeds Rajesh Kumar Singh, who has been appointed as Officer on Special Duty in the Department of Defence. Bhatia's extensive experience includes key roles in both central and state governments, particularly in the Ministries of Corporate Affairs and Health & Family Welfare.



Foot Note:

- Served as Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce.
- Played a key role in shaping trade policies and negotiating free trade agreements.
- Held prominent positions in the Ministries of Corporate Affairs and Health & Family Welfare.
- Contributed to policy development and governance in the central government.

2. Sri Lanka announces visa-free access to Indians, nationals from 34 other countries from October 31

Sri Lanka has announced visa-free access for citizens from 35 countries, including India, the UK, and the US. This new policy will be effective from October 1, 2024. The decision was made by the Cabinet and reported by the Daily Mirror, citing Harin Fernando, Adviser to the Ministry of Tourism.



Foot Note:

- The list includes India, the UK, China, the US, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Australia, Denmark, Poland, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Nepal, Indonesia, Russia, and Thailand.
- Additional countries are Malaysia, Japan, France, Canada, the Czech Republic, Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Israel, Belarus, Iran, Sweden, South Korea, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, and New Zealand.
- There was earlier controversy over increased fees for on-arrival visas in Sri Lanka, managed by a foreign company.

About Sri Lanka:

Capitals: Colombo

President: Ranil Wickremesinghe

Prime minister: Dinesh Gunawardena

3.Asian Development Bank commits USD 500 mn loan for improving healthcare in Maharastra

ADB is assisting the state in creating a supportive environment through policy actions. Focus areas include recruiting and retaining quality doctors with performance-based incentives. Developing a new talent management policy and establishing India's first state-led centers of excellence in health care and medical education.



Foot Note:

- The loan will fund the establishment of four medical colleges with attached tertiary care hospitals.
- These facilities will include climate and disaster-resilient, gender-responsive, and socially inclusive features.
- They will be located in under-served districts, according to ADB.
- The loan aims to improve access to quality and affordable tertiary health care and medical education in Maharashtra.

About Asian Development Bank:

Headquarters: Philippines

Founded: 1966

President: Masatsugu Asakawa

4.NPCI Launches 'UPI Circle' for Secure Payments Among Trusted Users

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has unveiled a new feature called 'UPI Circle' on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) platform, allowing primary UPI account holders to securely delegate payment responsibilities to trusted secondary users. This feature aims to enhance convenience and security in digital transactions by enabling



primary users to link their UPI accounts with secondary users, who can then make payments on their behalf within pre-defined limits.

Foot Note:

- UPI Circle – Delegate Payments: A new feature introduced by the RBI in August.
- Primary User: Can establish a secure link with trusted secondary users on their UPI app.
- Payment Delegation: Allows partial or full payment delegation to secondary users.
- Transaction Limits: Primary user sets specific transaction limits for the secondary user.
- Purpose: Expands the reach and usage of digital payments.

About

Founded: 2008

Founders: Reserve Bank of India, Indian Banks' Association

Headquarters: Mumbai

5. KVIC & DoP Sign MoU For Physical Verification of PMEGP

Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) signed an important MoU with the Department of Posts working under the Ministry of Communications at KVIC, Rajghat New Delhi office on August 20.

Foot Note:



- Key Attendees: Chairman KVIC, Shri Manoj Kumar; Jt Secretary MSME, Shri Vipul Goyal; CEO KVIC, Shri Vatsalya Saxena; General Manager, Department of Posts, Ms. Manisha Bansal Badal.
- MoU Signing: Signed by Dr. Amanpreet Singh (Dy. General Manager, Department of Posts) and Shri Rajan Babu (Dy. CEO, PMEGP, KVIC).
- Postal Department Role: Employees will conduct physical verification of new units set up under PMEGP nationwide.
- KVIC's Role: KVIC will provide training to Postal Department employees for conducting these verifications.

6. Bajaj Allianz and HSBC India form bancassurance partnership

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance and HSBC India have announced a strategic partnership. The partnership will provide HSBC's customers with access to Bajaj Allianz's full range of insurance products and services. The collaboration aims to promote financial inclusion and customer empowerment across India.

Foot Note:



- The partnership will offer personalized insurance solutions tailored to customer needs.
- It aims to provide enhanced services through the combined expertise, resources, and technologies of both organizations.
- The goal is to enrich clients' financial security.

About Bajaj Allianz:

CEO: Tarun Chugh

Headquarters: Pune

Founded: 2001

7.ICGS Sujay makes port call in Indonesia for a visit as part of overseas deployment to East Asia

The two-day visit will involve the ICGS Sujay crew engaging in professional interactions on Marine Pollution Response (MPR), Maritime Search and Rescue (M-SAR), and Maritime Law Enforcement. Activities include interactions with BAKAMLA (Indonesia Coast Guard), cross-deck training, joint yoga sessions, friendly sports events, and a Passage Sea Exercise (PASSEX) with BAKAMLA.



Foot Note:

- The visit aims to strengthen ties between the Indian Coast Guard and Indonesian counterparts.
- It also showcases India's shipbuilding capabilities.
- Supports the concept of "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" (Self-Reliant India).

8.Bollywood star Salman Khan named brand ambassador for GRM basmati rice

Salman Khan expressed excitement about partnering with GRM, a brand aligned with his values of quality and authenticity. GRM Overseas appointed Salman Khan as the brand ambassador for its basmati rice and wheat flour.



Foot Note:

- GRM MD Atul Garg highlighted Salman Khan's mass appeal aligns with the 10X basmati rice and 10X Shakti wheat flour ranges.
- Salman Khan is excited about partnering with GRM.
- He values the brand's commitment to quality and authenticity.

9.Rajesh Nambiar quits Cognizant,appointed as Nasscom president designate

Rajesh Nambiar has been appointed as the president-designate of the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM), succeeding Debjani Ghosh, whose

tenure concludes in November 2024. Following this appointment, Nambiar has resigned from his role as Chairman and Managing Director of Cognizant India. His extensive industry experience, including leadership roles at TCS, IBM, Ciena, and Cognizant, positions him as a key figure in guiding India's tech sector through its next phase of growth.



Foot Note:

- Nambiar is excited about leading NASSCOM, focusing on the transition to AI-first companies.
- He emphasized the importance of talent, growth, and investment in IP creation and R&D.
- Ghosh praised NASSCOM's role in India's global tech leadership and expressed confidence in Nambiar's ability to advance the organization.

10. Bihar Governor unveils book 'Gandhian Statesman of Bihar: Nitish Kumar'

Bihar Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar launched the book 'Gandhian Statesman of Bihar: Nitish Kumar' on 19th August 2024 in Patna. The book is published by Prabhat Prakashan, New Delhi. Co-authored by Ashok Choudhary, Minister of Rural Works Department, Bihar, and his daughter Shambhavi Choudhary, MP (Lok Sabha), Samastipur.



Foot Note:

- The book highlights Nitish Kumar's contributions to Bihar's development.
- Aims to educate the younger generation about his work.
- Ashok Choudhary described Nitish Kumar as having a simple dress, slow pace, soft tone, slight smile, and heartwarming manner.
- Emphasized that it's impossible to fully capture the CM's personality and ideology in just a few words.

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