

Maharashtra Weekly Current Affairs 23 to 29 October 2023

Maharashtra State News

First integrated solid waste management project - in Badlapur

In News:

- Mumbai's first integrated solid waste management project will be set up in Badlapur to treat waste from three cities, with a capacity of 641 tonnes per day.

Key Points:

- The project is expected to be completed in nine months.
- MMRDA has contributed ₹128 crore for the project
- The company will segregate garbage and sell waste materials to manufacturers, reducing waste disposal costs.

About Integrated Solid Waste Management (ISWM):

- Integrated solid waste management (ISWM) is a strategic approach to solid waste management that considers all aspects of the waste stream, from generation to disposal.
- ISWM aims to reduce the amount of waste generated, maximize the recovery of recyclable and reusable materials, and dispose of remaining waste in an environmentally sound manner.

NMMC to use smart lighting technology

In News:

- NMMC(Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation) to use smart lighting technology to beautify the city

Key Points:

- The lighting will be based on different occasions and themes.
- The initiative aims to improve the city's ranking in the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.
- In addition, decorative lights will be installed on trees along Palm Beach Road.

Global Maritime India Summit 2023

In News: World looking at us with new aspirations: PM

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India is gaining economic strength and will soon be among the top three global economies.

Key Points:

- He emphasized the importance of the maritime sector and highlighted the potential benefits of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.

- Modi also announced projects worth over ₹23,000 crore and unveiled the 'Amrit Kaal Vision 2047' for the Indian maritime blue economy.
- The Global Maritime India Summit aims to attract investment in the maritime sector and will discuss various key issues in the industry.

India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.

- The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) is a planned economic corridor that aims to bolster economic development by fostering connectivity and economic integration between Asia, the Persian Gulf and Europe.
- The corridor is proposed to stretch from India to Europe through the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel and Greece.
- It will encompass a vast network of roads, railways, seaports and airports, as well as digital infrastructure.
- IMEC was first announced in 2023, and is still in its early stages of development.
- However, it has the potential to be a major transformative project, with the potential to boost trade, investment and economic growth across the region.
- The corridor is seen as a complement to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), but with a focus on promoting democratic and market-based values.
- It is also seen as a way to counter China's growing influence in the region.

Maha state universities to soon offer undergraduate courses

In News: Maha state universities to soon offer undergraduate courses to increase campus enrolment

- Campuses of state universities, which are primarily known for their postgraduate (PG) education, will soon start offering a plethora of undergraduate (UG) courses.

Key Points:

- Currently, UG courses are mainly offered at affiliated colleges of state universities.
- With university campuses recording poor enrolment across PG courses in their departments, the Maharashtra government is pushing all state universities to add more UG programmes.
- This is also in line with the University Grants Commission (UGC) guidelines for National Education Policy (NEP) which expects universities

to offer multi-disciplinary education from UG to PhD.

PM Kisan Yojna

In News:

- Just 85 lakh farmers in Maharashtra beneficiaries of PM Kisan Yojna
- There is a steady decline in the number of farmer beneficiaries under the much-publicized PM Kisan Yojna in Maharashtra.

Key Points:

- The scheme aims to provide financial assistance of Rs 6,000 per year to each of the eligible farmers.
- It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in February 2019 to enhance their economic status and tackle the agrarian crisis.
- According to official records, 1.17 crore farmers had registered their names on the PM Kisan Yojna portal, of whom 97 lakh were declared as eligible for financial assistance while 85 lakh received the funds as the rest had failed to comply with the norms.

Think:

Read about PM Kisan Yojana

MNREGA

Context: MNREGA is the only support in the drought situation

Key Points:

- This year, due to lack of rain at the right time and in the right amount, the farmer is in trouble
- Tankers and fodder camps may be the immediate answer to this calamity, but there is no alternative to MNREGA for the long-term overall welfare of farmers.
- Drought crisis often comes in slow steps and its impact is long lasting.

Key facts:

- MNREGA, is a social welfare program in India that aims to provide at least 100 days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.
- The Act was passed in 2005 and came into effect in February 2006.

Khelghar (PlayHouse)

In News:

- Shubda Joshi, has been successfully implementing the creative education experiment 'Khelghar', for the past 27 years.

Key Points:

- Today, 200 children between the ages of 6 and 18 are coming to the 'Khelghar' every day and getting to know the world beyond school through games, art, communication and reading.
- 'Khelghar' is an innovative experiment in creative education, which develops the personality of children from underprivileged groups between the ages of 6 and 18 through games, art and communication in an informal way outside of school.

Did you Know?

- Khelghar is a non-governmental organization (NGO) in India that works to provide holistic education and development to underprivileged children.
- Khelghar was founded in 1972 by Maitreyi Devi, a social activist and educationist

Tourism even in grasslands in Pune, Solapur district

Context: Now there will be tourism even in grasslands; 'This' is the first experiment in the state in Pune, Solapur district

- For the first time in Maharashtra, grass safari is being started in Pune and Solapur districts.
- It is likely to start in Baramati and Indapur talukas.
- This activity is being implemented on behalf of Pune Forest Department.
- Safari registration for citizens is starting from October 18.
- In this regard, the Forest Department has developed an 'Online Booking App'.

Namo city beautification drive

In News: To mark PM's 73rd birthday, state asks 73 civic bodies to undertake beautification.

- As part of the 'Namo 11 point programme', the state has decided to implement 'Namo city beautification drive' in 73 cities across the state.
- All civic bodies will have to spend money from their own funds.
- The beautification drive will be undertaken in 48 Municipal councils and 25 municipal corporations, including CM Eknath Shinde's hometown, Thane.

Pramod Mahajan Grameen Kaushalya Vikas Kendras

In News:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch 511 rural skill development centres in the name of late BJP leader Pramod Mahajan in Maharashtra via video conferencing.

Key Points:

- The PMO said in a statement that these centres are being established across 34 rural districts of Maharashtra.
- They will conduct skill development training programs across various sectors to provide employment opportunities to the rural youth, it said.

Blackbuck Killed in Gondia

In News:

- A sub-adult blackbuck died after being hit by a speeding vehicle in Maharashtra's Gondia district

Key Points:

- The deceased Blackbuck's remains were transported to the forest department's 'Van Bhavan' in Gondia.
- The blackbuck (Antelope cervicapra), also known as the Indian antelope, is a species of antelope native to India and Nepal.
- It is a medium-sized antelope with a slender build and long, spiral horns.
- The male blackbucks have black fur
- The females and juveniles are fawn-colored.

IUCN Status: Least Concern

SPPU unveils unique emblem to Celebrate platinum jubilee year

In News:

- In honor of the Platinum Jubilee Year of Savitribai Phule Pune University (SPPU), MH CM and Deputy CM unveiled a unique emblem.

Key Points:

- The ceremony, attended by various ministers, including Vice-Chancellor Dr. Suresh Gosavi, Pro-Chancellor Dr. Parag Kalkar, and President of the Amrit Mahotsav Committee, Rajendra Vikhe Patil, was a momentous occasion.
- SPPU, known for its national prominence, is celebrating its Amrit Mahotsavi year (Platinum Jubilee Year) throughout the academic year 2023-24.
- To mark this significant milestone, a series of activities and events have been thoughtfully organized.

One State, One Uniform policy in Maharashtra from next year

In News: The 'One State, One Uniform' policy will be implemented in all government schools in Maharashtra from the academic year 2024-25.

Key Points:

- The standardized uniforms for class 1 to 8 could not take off this academic year as many schools were ready with their own uniforms when they reopened in June.
- The state's identical attire will be on the lines of a scout and guide uniform.
- Students will get two sets of uniforms.
- One of the two uniforms will have shoulder strips and double pockets.

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue for installation in J&K

In News: Maharashtra Governor and CM Shinde flag off Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue for installation in J&K

- Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais and Chief Minister Eknath Shinde flagged off statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj to be installed in Kupwara in Jammu and Kashmir.

Key Points:

- The statue will be presented to the Rashtriya Rifles 41 Maratha Light Infantry Regiment at Kupwara.
- The statue is made of bronze and is 11 feet tall.

About Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj:

- Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was a 17th-century Indian warrior king who founded the Maratha Empire.
- Shivaji was **born in the hill fort of Shivneri in 1630.**

His father, Shahaji Raje Bhonsle, was a Maratha general who served the Bijapur Sultanate.

Mumbai's air quality worsens

In News:

- BMC has issued new air quality guidelines as the city's average air quality worsens.

Key Points:

- The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) issued a warning that it would halt construction activities at all sites if dust and pollution control measures were not being implemented
- The civic body also plans to operate anti-smog guns on major roads.
- Experts from the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board and BMC will verify pollution levels caused by refineries, the Tata power plant and the RCF plant in the city. not meet these requirements.

About Air Quality Index

Key points:

- The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a measure of the level of air pollution in a particular location.

- It is calculated using the concentrations of five major air pollutants:
 1. Ground-level ozone (O3)
 2. Particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10)
 3. Nitrogen dioxide (NO2)
 4. Sulfur dioxide (SO2)
 5. Carbon monoxide (CO)

France Navy Ship 'Languedoc'

In News:

- French Navy Ship 'Languedoc' visited Mumbai from 13 to 18 October.

Key Points:

- Personnel of the French and the Indian Navy undertook professional exchanges through cross-visits and shared best practices.
- Languedoc (D653) is an Aquitaine-class frigate of the French Navy
- Languedoc is also equipped with a variety of electronic warfare and communications systems

Maharashtra spends only 4.1% of its budget on health.

In News:

- Maha at bottom of 28 states' list with 4.1% health budget'
- Maharashtra's health budget is significantly lower than recommended, and the state is not even fully spending what is allocated.

Key Points:

- The national health policy says 8% of the state budget should be allocated to health.
- States such as Meghalaya and Goa spend over 8%, larger states such as Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh spend 6%-7%
- The health system in Maharashtra is facing multiple challenges, including low budgetary allocation and failure to fully spend the allocated funds on healthcare.
- This leads to inadequate infrastructure and manpower, resulting in unfortunate situations such as high death rates in hospitals.

Basketball Federation of India (BFI) has appointed a three-member committee in MH

Context:

- To clear the mess in Maharashtra's basketball associations, Basketball Federation of India (BFI) has appointed a three-member committee to run the affairs in the state.

- The development came a week after newly elected and youngest president of BFI Aadhav Arjuna visited Mumbai and held discussions with members of various district associations, senior coaches, and administrators of Maharashtra.

Two 660MW units at Koradi Power Station

In News: Chief minister Eknath Shinde announced that the cabinet has given its approval for setting up of two 660 MW coal-based supercritical units at the Koradi thermal power station.

Key Points:

- Located at Koradi near Nagpur, Maharashtra.
- This will ensure more power is generated in Maharashtra and can meet any shortfall in power distribution in future.
- The project costs Rs 10,625 crore.

Five air quality monitoring stations starts functioning in MH

In News:

- Five more Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring System (CAAQMS) stations, set up and established by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), are now functional in the city.

Key Points:

- Mumbaikars will have a total of 25 air quality measuring stations in the city.
- The air pollutants measured are as follows: SO2, NO, NO2, NH3, CO, O3, CO3, VOC, PM10, and PM2.

Significance:

CAAQMS stations are important because they:

- Help calculate the air quality index
- Issue health advisories
- Formulate action plans to meet standards
- Enable small-scale environmental data monitoring
- Can be deployed in large numbers across urban and rural areas
- Make environmental monitoring possible even in remote areas

Increase in VAT on liquor

In News:

- Starting November 1, the cost of liquor in hotels, bars, lounges and clubs in Maharashtra will rise due to a 5 per cent increase in the Value Added Tax (VAT) announced by the state government.

Key Points:

- The VAT rate for permit room liquor services will now be 10 per cent, up from the previous 5 per cent.
- Furthermore, the government is considering implementing a new excise policy that links pricing to the alcohol content of beverages and permits the sale of bottled liquors in bars and permit rooms.

No coastal zone authority nod needed to construct structures up to 300 sqm

In News:

- MCZMA informs urban planning bodies in coastal districts that no permission is needed for less than 300 sqm construction or redevelopment.

Key Points:

- So far, owners of such properties had to get permission from MCZMA or district coastal zone management authorities and it took a significant time before applicants got permission.
- Now, the applicants will have to apply to the respective municipal councils, corporations or district-level authorities.