



FVF RYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS - October

TAMIL NADU

- **The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Pondicherry University - have announced collaboration to offer a postgraduate course in public health entomology (MSC PHE)**
- ✓ The new course will be conducted at the ICMR's five institutes in Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Puducherry.
- ✓ The council will offer the unique postgraduate course under the National Public Health Entomology (NPHE) programme with Pondicherry University's affiliation.
- ✓ The council's Vector Control Research Centre (VCRC) in Puducherry will be the nodal centre for the programme.

STATES

- **On October 26, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena - launched the 'SAMRIDDHI 2022-23', a one-time property tax amnesty scheme for residents of authorised and regularised colonies of Delhi.**



- ✓ SAMRIDDHI is an acronym for 'Strengthening and Augmentation of Municipal Revenue for Infrastructure Development' in Delhi
- ✓ The scheme will start on October 26 and end on March 31, 2023, with no further extensions.

- ✓ The amnesty scheme envisages 'one plus five' formula for residential and 'one plus six' for non-residential properties
 - ✓ Under the 'one plus five' scheme, residential property owners can pay just the principal property tax amount of the current and of the past five years.
 - ✓ For commercial properties under 'one plus six' scheme, owners can pay the principal amount case of the current and the last six years to get a waiver on past pending dues, including penalty and interest
- ✓ In case a taxpayer fails to settle his tax dues by March 31, 2023, he shall be liable to pay all tax dues along with interest and penalty since 2004 or since whichever year it has been pending and shall not be entitled to any waiver
- ✓ The coercive measures to collect the tax dues shall be launched against such defaulters from April 1, 2023.

NATIONAL

- **On October 26, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) - issued the aerodrome licence to Mopa Airport in Goa**
 - ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the new Greenfield airport built by GMR Group.
 - ✓ GMR Goa International Airport Limited, a subsidiary of GMR Airports Limited, is developing the airport under a public-private partnership model on a design, build, finance, operate and transfer basis
 - ✓ Once operational, regular commercial flights will operate from both the existing Dabolim Airport and the new one at Mopa.
 - ✓ Dabolim is a Naval airport with limited slots for few scheduled commercial flights
 - ✓ Being 100% civilian airport, Mopa airport will be able to handle 4.4 million passengers annually in the first phase
 - ✓ This is expected to increase to 13.1 million by the completion of the final fifth phase of construction.
- **Two new Indian beaches, Minicoy Thundi Beach and Kadmat Beach, both in Lakshadweep – were accorded the globally recognised and coveted international eco-label 'Blue Flag'**



- ✓ This takes the number of beaches certified under the Blue Flag certification in the country to 12.
 - ✓ Both beaches comply with all the 33 criteria mandated by the Denmark-headquartered Foundation for Environment Education (FEE), which accords the Blue Flag certification
 - ✓ Earlier, in September 2021, Kovalam Beach in Tamil Nadu and Eden Beach in Puducherry made it to the 'Blue Flag' list.
 - ✓ Apart from these Ghoghla Beach in Diu, Golden Beach in Odisha, Kappad Beach in Kerala, Kasarkod Beach in Karnataka, Padubidri Beach in Karnataka, Radhanagar Beach in Andaman and Nicobar, Rushikonda Beach in Andhra Pradesh, Shivrajpur Beach in Gujarat are also recognized as 'Blue Beaches'.
 - ✓ The mission of Blue Flag is to promote sustainability in the tourism sector through environmental education, environmental protection and other sustainable development practices.
 - ✓ It is awarded annually to FEE member countries based on the recommendations of an International jury
 - ✓ The jury includes the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
 - ✓ The Blue Flag programme was started in 1987, initially in Europe
 - ✓ As per the Blue Flag website, a total of 5042 sites are awarded certificates across 48 countries.
 - ✓ Spain with 729 sites tops the list of countries with Blue Flag awarded sites.
 - ✓ It is followed by Greece and Turkey with 591 and 560 sites respectively.
 - ✓ India is placed at 36th place, with 12 sites accorded the international tag.
- **The central regulator, Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) — has approved “environmental release” of the transgenic mustard (DMH-11) for seed production and testing.**
- ✓ This enables the commercial release of indigenously developed genetically modified (GM) mustard
 - ✓ The process will, however, take a minimum two years before farmers finally get DMH-11 seeds for commercial cultivation.
 - ✓ The approval will make GM mustard only the second approved transgenic crop in India after Bt cotton, and the first such food crop that can be commercially cultivated by farmers.
 - ✓ Centre for Genetic Manipulation of Crop Plants (CGMCP) developed the GM mustard.
 - ✓ The approval is initially given for four years, which can be renewed for two years at a time based on a compliance report.
 - ✓ However, state governments will have power to deny permission of environmental release.

- **Union minister of state for fisheries and information and broadcasting L Murugan - will visit Kulgam district in South Kashmir on October 27 and 28 as part of the Union Government's Public Outreach Programme for the Union Territory.**
- ✓ During the visit, the Minister will review the progress of flood protection works at Arriguntoo and also inaugurate Phase IV of the flood protection bund at the same place.
 - ✓ The estimated cost of this Flood Protection Bund is Rs. one crore and the bund will avert flood threat to more than five villages in the district.
- ✓ The Minister will also inaugurate Amrit Sarovar and Public Park at Checkpora.
- ✓ Besides these engagements, the minister will also visit the famous Aherbal waterfall and review integrated farming practices at Modergam

INTERNATIONAL

- **On October 26, New Zealand - passed the Plain Language Bill, that requires bureaucrats to use simple, easily understood language while communicating with the public**
- ✓ The new law bans the usage of complicated English words and jargons
- ✓ The move is aimed at helping people who speak English as their second language, those with disabilities, and the less educated
- ✓ According to the Bill, plain language is defined as “appropriate to the intended audience” and “clear, concise, and well organised”
- ✓ However, the Act does not restrict the use of Maori language (language of indigenous people in New Zealand) in official documents and websites
- ✓ According to the New Zealand parliamentary office, the Bill was first introduced in September 2021
- **On October 26, Germany – has announced plans to legalise cannabis for recreational purposes**
- ✓ As promised by Chancellor Olaf Scholz, Germany aims to regulate the controlled distribution and consumption of cannabis for recreational purposes among adults
- ✓ The legal limit for acquiring and possessing recreational cannabis would be 20 to 30 grams
- ✓ The government also allows state-licensed and controlled commercial cultivation and distribution of cannabis
- ✓ It also plans to introduce a special consumption tax, as well as developing cannabis-related education and prevention work.
- ✓ Legalising cannabis could bring Germany annual tax revenues and cost savings of about 4.7 billion euros (\$4.7 billion) and create 27,000 new jobs
- ✓ The coalition government struck an agreement last year to introduce legislation during its four-year term to allow the controlled distribution of cannabis in licensed shops.

- ✓ Germany becomes the second EU country to legalise cannabis after Malta.
- ✓ The use of cannabis for medicinal purposes has been legal in Germany since 2017.

RANKINGS

- **IIT-Bombay - has emerged as the best educational institution in India in the first ever “QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2023”**
- ✓ Globally, the University of California, Berkeley (from the US) was ranked as the topmost institution
- ✓ It is followed by two Canadian institutions, the University of Toronto (second) and the University of British Columbia (third).
- ✓ Other universities to complete the top 10 are the University of Edinburgh, University of New South Wales, University of Sydney, University of Tokyo, University of Pennsylvania, Yale University and the University of Auckland
- ✓ The US dominates the rankings with 135 ranked universities (19.2% of the total), while the United Kingdom is the second-most represented country, with 67 universities ranked (9.5%).
- ✓ Germany is the third-best for overall representation, with 39 universities, followed by China with 37 and Australia with 33.
- ✓ A total of 700 institutes feature in the list, of which 15 universities are from India.
- ✓ Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT-B) featured at the top in the 281-300 rank range, followed by IIT-Delhi (321-340 rank) and Jawaharlal Nehru University at the third rank (361-380).
- ✓ University of Delhi which features in the 381-400 rank range was ranked at fourth place and the Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IITK) is on the fifth spot (451-500).
- ✓ Jadavpur University became the only state-run varsity from India to feature in the QS Sustainability World Ranking 2023, ranked at eighth position.
- ✓ QS World University Rankings: Sustainability ranking is a new framework to evaluate how universities are taking action to tackle the world’s most pressing environmental and social issues
- ✓ The ranking is based on sustainability performance focusing on environmental and social impacts of the higher education institutes
- ✓ It has considered metrics like sustainable education, sustainable research, equality, knowledge exchange and impact of education.

