



Mines Surveillance System | Uttarakhand | 20 Jun 2024

Why in News?

Recently, The Uttarakhand government approved a Rs 93-crore proposal for the installation of **Mining Digital Transformation and Surveillance System (MDTSS)**, across the state to curb [illegal mining](#).

Key Points

- The systems will be installed at 40 check gates across **Dehradun, Haridwar, Nainital, and Udham Singh Nagar**.
- The new system equipped with bullet cameras, [Radio Frequency Identification \(RFID\) radars](#), and [Light Emitting Diodes \(LED\) floodlights](#) will not only **help monitor illegal mining activities** but also **boost the state government's revenue**.
- **A Mining State Control Centre (MSCC)** will be set up in Dehradun, along with mini command centres at district headquarters in Dehradun, Haridwar, Nainital, and Udham Singh Nagar.

Illegal Mining

- **About:**
 - Illegal mining is the extraction of minerals, ores, or other valuable resources from land or water bodies **without the necessary permits, licenses, or regulatory approvals** from government authorities.
 - It can also involve the violation of environmental, labor, and safety standards.
- **Issues:**
 - **Environmental Degradation:**
 - It can lead to deforestation, soil erosion, and water pollution and can result in the **destruction of habitats for wildlife**, which can have serious ecological consequences.
 - **Hazards:**
 - Illegal mining often involves the **use of hazardous chemicals such as [mercury](#) and [cyanide](#)**, which can pose serious **health risks to miners** and nearby communities.
 - **Loss of Revenue:**
 - It can lead to a **loss of revenue for governments** as miners may not pay appropriate taxes and royalties.
 - This can have significant economic impacts, particularly in countries where natural resources are a major source of revenue.
 - **Human Rights Violations:**
 - Illegal mining can also result in [human rights violations](#), including forced labor, child labor, and exploitation of vulnerable populations.

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) radars

- RFID is a **type of passive [wireless technology](#)** that allows for tracking or matching of an item or individual.
- **The system has two basic parts: Tags and Readers.**
 - The **reader gives off radio waves and gets signals back from the RFID tag**, while the **tag uses radio waves to communicate** its identity and other information.

- A tag can be read from up to several feet away and does not need to be within the direct line-of-sight of the reader to be tracked.
- The technology has been **approved since before the 1970s** but has become much more **prevalent in recent years** due to its usages in things like global supply chain management and pet microchipping.

Special Tourist Train | Uttarakhand | 20 Jun 2024

Why in News?

According to the sources, The [Uttarakhand Tourism Department](#) has partnered with Indian [Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation \(IRCTC\)](#) to operate a dedicated tourist **train** bound for **south India**.

Key Points

- The unique train approved by the Central government, called **Kedar Badri Kartik (Murugan) Koil Yathirai**, will commence its inaugural journey with **165 travelers from Madurai in Tamil Nadu to Rishikesh**.
- All 165 passengers boarding the train have been given **special tour packages for 12 days and nights**.
 - It includes visits to the newly found tourist place [Kartik Swami Temple](#) in [Rudraprayag](#), [Badrinath](#), and [Kedarnath](#).
 - The tour package includes complete lodging and boarding facilities for the tourists.
- The Uttarakhand Tourism aims at attracting more pilgrims from the south, especially Chennai, to associate them with Kartik Swami Temple, a newly developed important tourist destination in Rudraprayag district.
 - According to the belief **lord Kartikeya**, son of Shiva, came here with his parents and **handed out his bones to the father and flesh to the mother**.
 - It's said **these bones are present in the temple**. In north India, this is the **lone temple of lord Kartikeya**, known as the [deity Murugan](#) in South India.
- The Uttarakhand Tourism Department has collaborated with IRCTC to operate special trains from various regions of India, particularly Western and South India.
 - Two such special trains called **Manaskhand Express** were launched from Pune in March and April, 2024 to **attract tourists from Maharashtra and other states** in the west to the **Kumaon regions**.

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)

- It is a **Mini Ratna Category-I (conferred in 2008) Central Public Sector Enterprise** that is wholly-owned by and is under the administrative control of the **Ministry of Railways**.
- It is a registered enterprise and its corporate office is situated at New Delhi.
- IRCTC was incorporated in September **1999** as an extended arm of the Indian Railways to upgrade, professionalize and manage the **catering and hospitality services at stations**, on trains and other locations.
- The firm currently operates in 4 business segments namely, **Internet ticketing, Catering, Packaging Drinking Water, and Travel and Tourism**.
- It is the only entity that is authorized by Indian Railways to provide catering services to railways, online railway tickets and packaged drinking water at railway stations and trains in the country.
 - This gives it advantages in increasing market share in e-ticketing, packaged drinking water, and in e-catering.

Pension Benefit to Sickle Cell Anemia Patients | Jharkhand | 20 Jun 2024

Why in News?

According to the officials, People suffering from [sickle cell anemia](#) will get a **monthly pension of Rs 1,000** in Jharkhand's **Khunti district**.

Key Points

- The Khunti district administration has approved pension benefits for persons suffering from sickle cell anemia under [Swami Vivekananda Nishakt Swavlamban Protsahan Scheme](#).
 - In the **first phase, nine beneficiaries have been identified from different blocks** - three each from Khunti and Karra, two from Murhu and one from Torpa block.
- In case any sickle cell case coming to light or identified later on it will be covered under this scheme.
- Sickle cell screening of 99,165 people has been conducted so far in the district.
 - Out of which 114 were found to be carriers of sickle cell and a total of 46 persons were found to be suffering from [sickle cell anemia-thalassemia disease](#).
 - Among them, nine people who have been suffering from **40% or more sickle cell anemia-thalassemia disease are being given pension under the scheme** on the basis of disability certificate.

Swami Vivekananda Nishakta Swavlamban Protsahan Yojana

- It is a scheme launched by the **Department of Women, Child Development & Social Security, Government of Jharkhand**.
- It aims to provide **social security to differently abled people** aged five years and above who are in need of **financial assistance**.
- The scheme operates as a [Direct Benefit Transfer \(DBT\)](#) where the pension amount is directly transferred to the bank account of the beneficiary.

Sickle Cell Disease

- Sickle cell disease is a genetic blood disorder characterized by an abnormality in hemoglobin, the **protein responsible for carrying oxygen in red blood cells**.
- It causes **red blood cells to adopt a sickle or crescent shape**, hindering their movement through vessels, leading to potential complications like **severe pain, infections, [anaemia](#), and strokes**.
- In India alone, an estimated **30,000-40,000 children** are born with sickle cell disease annually.

Thalassaemia

- Similar to **sickle cell disease**, individuals with **thalassaemia experience severe anaemia due to low haemoglobin levels**, necessitating lifelong blood transfusions and **chelation therapy** to manage iron accumulation.
- Major symptoms include **fatigue, paleness or [jaundice](#), shortness of breath, delayed growth, facial bone deformities (in severe cases)** among others.

PM-KISAN Scheme | Uttar Pradesh | 20 Jun 2024

Why in News?

The Prime Minister of India granted the disbursement of the **17th installment** of [Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi \(PM-KISAN\)](#), reflecting the commitment of the government towards [farmer welfare](#).

Key Points

- The 17th installment will be given to more than **Rs 20,000 crore** to around **9.26 crore** beneficiary farmers under the **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)** through [Direct Benefit Transfer](#).
 - So far, more than **11 crore** eligible farmer families have received benefits of more than **Rs. 3.04 lakh crore** under **PM-KISAN**.
- Certificates to more than 30,000 women from [Self Help Groups \(SHGs\)](#) as **Krishi Sakhis** were also granted.
- **Krishi Sakhi Convergence Program (KSCP)** aims to transform rural India through the **empowerment of rural women as Krishi Sakhi**, by imparting training and certification of Krishi Sakhis as **Para-extension Workers**.
- This certification course **also aligns** with the objectives of the "[Lakhpati Didi](#)" Program.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

- Under the scheme, the Centre **transfers an amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal installments**, directly into the bank accounts of **all landholding farmers irrespective of the size of their land holdings**.
 - It was launched in **February 2019**.
- It is a **Central Sector Scheme with 100% funding from the Government of India**.
- It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**.
- The entire responsibility of **identification of beneficiary farmer families rests with the State / UT Governments**.
- **Objective:**
 - To **supplement the financial needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers** in procuring various inputs to ensure proper crop health and appropriate yields, commensurate with the anticipated farm income at the end of each crop cycle.
 - To **protect them from falling in the clutches of moneylenders** for meeting such expenses and ensure their continuance in the farming activities.

Lakhpati Didi Scheme

- The government's goal is to create **two crore "lakhpati didis" (prosperous sisters) in villages**. This scheme aligns with the broader mission of poverty alleviation and economic empowerment.
- Under this scheme, **women will be provided skill training so that they can earn over Rs 1 lakh per year**.
- **Features:**
 - Drones will be **provided to women SHGs for agricultural activities**.
 - This initiative aims to leverage technology to transform the agricultural landscape while empowering women **in rural communities**.
 - Around **15,000 women's SHGs will be given training in operating and repairing drones**.
 - This training will not only create new avenues for income generation but also equip

women with cutting-edge skills.

- Drones have the potential to revolutionize agriculture by enabling [precision farming](#), **crop monitoring, and pest control**.
- Under the scheme, women will be trained in skills like [LED bulb making](#), **plumbing, among others**.

Development of Varanasi International Airport | Uttar Pradesh | 20 Jun 2024

Why in News?

The Union Cabinet approved a comprehensive development plan for [Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport in Varanasi](#), with a projected cost of **Rs 2869.65 crore**.

- The [Airports Authority of India \(AAI\)](#) will oversee the project, which aims to significantly **enhance the airport's passenger handling capacity**.

Key Points

- The project involves building a **fresh terminal, lengthening the runway, and enlarging the apron**.
 - The upcoming terminal will span **75,000 square meters**, catering to **6 million** passengers annually and handling up to **5,000 passengers** during peak hours.
 - This will showcase **Varanasi's cultural heritage**, providing travelers with a unique experience.
- The airport is on track to transform into an **eco-friendly airport** by prioritizing [environmental sustainability](#) through [energy efficiency](#), [recycling waste](#), [reducing carbon emissions](#), [harnessing solar power](#), and **maximizing natural light**.

Airports Authority of India (AAI)

- It was **constituted by an Airports Authority of India Act, 1994 of Parliament and came into being on 1st April 1995** by merging erstwhile **National Airports Authority and International Airports Authority of India**.
- The merger brought into existence a single organisation entrusted with the responsibility of creating, upgrading, maintaining and managing civil aviation infrastructure both on the ground and air space in the country.