



CURRENT AFFAIRS

18 July, 2024

1. THANE TO BORIVALI: INDIA'S LONGEST AND LARGEST URBAN TUNNEL -

- On July 13, 2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated India's longest and largest urban tunnel project, the Thane Borivali Twin Tunnel, developed by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA).
- This Rs. 16,600 crore project will reduce travel time between Thane and Borivali from over an hour to just 12 minutes, cutting the travel distance by 12 km. This initiative is part of broader infrastructure projects worth Rs. 29,000 crore aimed at enhancing connectivity in Mumbai.



Key Highlights of the Thane Borivali Twin Tunnel

- **Tunnel Length:** 11.8 km
- **Route:** From Thane to National Highway 8 at Borivali
- **Estimated Cost:** Rs. 16,600 crore
- **Operational Lanes:** 2 operational lanes, 1 emergency lane
- **Travel Time Reduction:** More than 1 hour saved (journey completed in 12 minutes)
- **Carbon Emissions Reduction:** 1,50,000 MT per year
- **Completion Target:** May 2028

2. INDIA PREPARES TO SIGN HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT WITH GLOBAL BIOFUELS ALLIANCE -

- The Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA), launched in September 2023 by key G20 members including India, the United States, and Brazil, is poised to take a significant step forward in its institutional development. The Indian government is preparing to sign a headquarters agreement with the alliance, marking a crucial milestone in the organization's evolution and India's



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role in global sustainable energy initiatives.

The impending headquarters agreement will grant the GBA:

- Diplomatic status within India
- Recognition as an international organization
- An independent legal persona
- This elevated status will enable the GBA to function more efficiently at the international level, mirroring the recognition given to other global initiatives like the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

3. YUAN CHALLENGE -

- India has been trying to become less dependent on the US dollar and lower its oil import costs by trading more with Russia in recent years.
- Trade between the two countries is supposed to reach \$100 billion by 2030. However, after the war in Ukraine in 2022, the relationship changed, with India buying a lot more oil from Russia.
- Russia is benefiting from India's trade imbalance because it saves money by buying cheaper oil from Russia but not exporting enough to balance the trade, which is currently at a deficit of \$57 billion out of \$66 billion in FY24.



4. KARNATAKA CABINET APPROVES RESERVATION FOR KANNADIGAS -

- Karnataka Cabinet approved a Bill mandating 50-75% reservation for Kannadigas in private jobs, including the IT sector.
- Companies face fines of Rs 10,000 to Rs 25,000 and Rs 100 per day for non-compliance.
- Local candidates must possess a secondary school certificate with Kannada or pass a Kannada proficiency test; exemptions allowed if local candidates are unavailable.



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5. INDIA'S FIRST NATIONAL NARCOTICS HELPLINE 'MANAS' TO BE LAUNCHED -

- **Union Home Minister Amit Shah will launch the national toll-free narcotics helpline 'MANAS' (1933) on July 18, 2024, during the Narco-Coordination Centre (NCORD) meeting.**
- **MANAS (Madak Padarth Nisedh Asuchna Kendra) will allow citizens to report narcotics crimes confidentially and 24x7, including drug trafficking, illegal sales, and cultivation.**



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