



23 November 2024

Kerala Regional News

GST	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kerala houseboat industry is facing an uncertain future due to the state government's demand for an 18% Goods and Services Tax (GST) with retrospective effect from 2017. • This decision has caused significant financial burden on houseboat owners, with individual demands ranging from Rs 1 crore to Rs 7 crore. • The state government's classification of houseboats as "water transport" instead of "tour operators" has led to this dispute. • While the central GST office considers houseboats as tour operators, subject to a 5% GST rate, the state government's classification implies a higher tax rate. <p>About GST:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GST stands for Goods and Services Tax. • It is a comprehensive, multi-stage, destination-based tax levied on the supply of goods and services. <p>This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive: It subsumes most indirect taxes like VAT, service tax, excise duty, etc. • Multi-stage: Tax is charged at each stage of the supply chain, but only on the value added. • Destination-based: The final consumer in the state of consumption bears the tax. <p>Key Constitutional Provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 122nd Amendment: This amendment introduced Articles 246A, 269A, and 279A to the Constitution. • Article 246A: Grants concurrent powers to the Centre and states to make laws on GST. • Article 269A: Defines the levy and collection of Integrated GST (IGST) on inter-state supply of goods and services. • Article 279A: Establishes the GST Council, a body consisting of representatives from the Centre and states, to make recommendations on GST-related matters. <p>Key benefits of GST:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced tax burden: Eliminates cascading effect of taxes. • Improved compliance: Simplified tax structure. • Common national market: Reduces interstate trade barriers • Increased revenue: Better tax collection efficiency.
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<p>Hill highway project</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kerala's PWD Minister P A Mohamed Riyas has announced that the ambitious Hill Highway project is on track for completion by 2026. • The Hill Highway project in Kerala is officially designated as State Highway 59. • This project aims to improve connectivity and infrastructure in the hilly regions of the state. • The minister emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts to achieve this goal, along with the coastal highway project. <p>About:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hill Highway project in Kerala aims to create a 1332.16 km long highway traversing through 13 of the state's 14 districts. • This ambitious project will connect the hilly regions of Kerala, improving connectivity and boosting economic development.
<p>Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST)</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (SCTIMST) has developed a gelatin-modified bioink for 3D bioprinting of tissues. • This innovative bioink has the potential to revolutionize tissue engineering and regenerative medicine. • By using this bioink, researchers can create complex 3D tissue structures that closely mimic natural tissues, offering hope for treating various diseases and injuries. <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main ingredient in this bioink is a chemically modified gelatin or Gelatin Methacrylamide (GelMA). • It is India's first indigenous patented bioink formulation which can be used for the biofabrication of tissues of liver, kidney, pancreas, skin, brain and heart, using advanced three-dimensional (3D) bioprinting technology.
<p>WINGS survey</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the recent WINGS survey, a remarkable 183 bird species were documented in Thiruvananthapuram. • This highlights the city's rich biodiversity and its importance as a bird habitat. • While the overall count was lower than the previous year, the survey still revealed a diverse range of avian species, including some rare ones. <p>About:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WINGS survey in Kerala is a citizen science initiative aimed at monitoring bird populations across the state. • Conducted annually, it involves volunteers who record bird sightings in specific locations. • The data collected helps scientists and conservationists understand bird diversity, distribution, and potential threats.



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