

CURRENT AFFAIRS= 04-01-2021

BANANA GRIT

Scientists at the CSIR-National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology (NIIST) at Pappanamcode here in Kerala have come up with a new product, banana grit or granules, developed from raw Nendran bananas.



About:

The product resembles to 'rava' and broken wheat. Billed as an ideal ingredient for a healthy diet, banana grit can be used for making a wide range of dishes, according to the NIIST.

- The granules can be used for making upma, or it can be mixed with banana powder for porridge, with milk or coconut milk for use as a health drink.
- The concept was introduced to utilise the presence of resistant starch in bananas, which is reported to improve gut health.
- Hence, the dishes prepared with banana grit and its by-product, banana powder, incline to the new focus on gut health, which the scientific community is widely discussing now to maintain health and well-being.

Important Info :

Changalikodan Nendran Banana or famously known as Changalikodan is a banana variety originated and cultivated in Chengazhikodu village of Thrissur District in Kerala

Changalikodan, now are cultivated on the banks of the Bharathapuzha river.

Changalikodan got Geographical indication registration from the Geographical Indications Registry, Chennai.

Generally consumed ripe, Nendran banana also finds use in typical Kerala dishes such as avial and thoran.

TRANS FAT

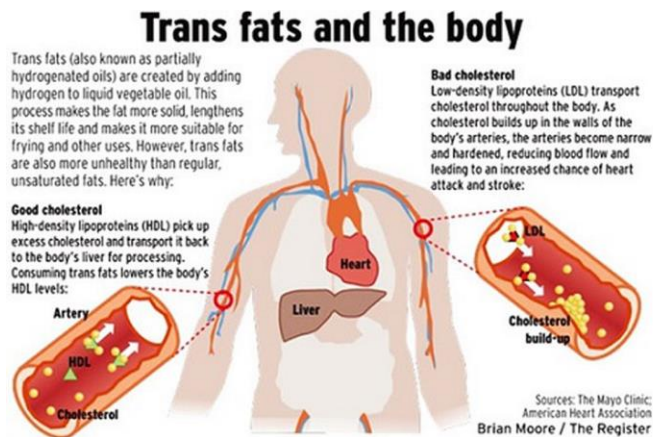
The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has capped the amount of trans fatty acids (TFA) in oils and fats to 3% for 2021 and 2% by 2022 from the current permissible limit of 5% through an amendment to the

Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations.



About:

- The FSSAI notified the amendment on December 29, more than a year after it issued a draft on the subject for consultation with stakeholders.



The revised regulation applies to edible refined oils, vanaspati (partially hydrogenated oils), margarine, bakery shortenings and other mediums of cooking such as vegetable fat spreads and mixed fat spreads.

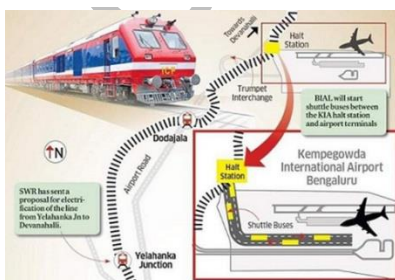
It was in 2011 that India first passed a regulation that set a TFA limit of 10% in oils and fats, which was

further reduced to 5% in 2015.

Important Info : Trans Fats?

- Trans fats, or trans-fatty acids, are a form of unsaturated fat. They come in both natural and artificial forms.
- Transfats are associated with an increased risk of heart attacks and death from coronary heart disease. Cardiovascular diseases, along with diabetes, are proving fatal for COVID-19 patients.
- According to the World Health Organization, approximately 5.4 lakh deaths take place each year globally because of the intake of industrially produced trans fatty acids.
- The WHO has also called for the global elimination of trans fats by 2023.

KEMPEGOWDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT HALT



Indian Railways' South Western Railway zone will start operating train services from Bengaluru city station to the newly built KIA, Devanahalli Railway halt station from January 4, 2021.

About:

The station has been built by the airport operator, Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) and on its completion was handed over to the railways.



NATIONAL METROLOGY CONCLAVE



Prime Minister Narendra Modi will deliver the inaugural address at the National Metrology Conclave on January 4, 2021 through video conferencing.

About:

National Metrology Conclave 2021 is being organised by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi which is entering into its 75th year of inception. The theme of the conclave is Metrology for the Inclusive Growth of the Nation.

- He will also dedicate National Atomic Timescale and Bhartiya Niradeshak Dravya to the nation and lay the foundation stone of the National Environmental Standards Laboratory.
- **The National Atomic Timescale** generates Indian Standard Time with an accuracy of 2.8 nanosecond.
- **Bhartiya Niradeshak Dravya** is supporting testing and calibration of laboratories for quality assurance, at par with international standards.
- **The National Environmental Standards Laboratory** will aid self-reliance in the certification of ambient air and industrial emission monitoring equipment.

TAMPON TAX

The UK began 2021 by abolishing a 5 per cent Value Added Tax (VAT) on women's sanitary products, often referred to as the "tampon tax" and which many activists had described as sexist.

About:

- It now joins the list of countries which have already eliminated this tax, which includes India, Australia and Canada.

- The measure is part of a wider UK government effort called ‘End Period Poverty’.

- Scotland, which is a part of the UK, made history in November 2020 by becoming the first country in the world to make period products free of cost to those who need them.



Background:

Until December 31, the UK was a part of the EU, where period products such as sanitary napkins and tampons are classified as non-essential, and member states are required to levy a 5 per cent tax on them.

Now that the UK is out of the 27-member bloc, it is not bound by its directives, under which sanitary products had been subjected to five different VAT rates since 1973— with the lowest 5 per cent slab being applicable since 2001.