DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 09-01-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

International Kite Festival

- The International Kite Festival 2023 began on 08 January 2023 in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- The festival, which is being organised after a gap of two years, was inaugurated by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel.
- The festival is being organised by Gujarat Tourism on the G20 theme of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.
- Apart from Ahmedabad, the International Kite Festival will also be organised in Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot, Dwarka, Somnath, Dhordo and Kevadia.
- This year kite lovers from different countries will attempt to create a Guinness World Record for the maximum number of kite flyers at the same time.

Voice of Global South Summit

- India will host a special virtual Summit on 12 and 13 January 2023 called 'Voice of Global South Summit'.
- The theme of the Summit is 'Unity of Voice, Unity of Purpose'.
- The summit is to bring together the countries of the South and share their perspectives and priorities on various issues.
- The summit is India's attempt to provide a common platform to discuss concerns affecting developing countries.
- India will work to ensure that the valuable inputs generated by participating countries in the Voice of the Global South deliberations receive due cognizance globally.

Global Centers of Research and Innovation

- Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh announced that all 37 CSIR Labs in India will be turned into Global Centers of Research and Innovation in their fields of specialisation.
- He also released the logo of CSIR's One Week One Lab campaign.
- Each of the 37 CSIR laboratories is unique in itself and specialises in diverse areas such as genomes to geology, food to fuels, minerals to materials etc.
- Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurates workshop and exhibition on "Innovation and Sustainable Construction Materials and Technologies" organised by CSIR-Central Building Research Institute (CSIR-CBRI), Roorkee with the aim of moving towards Net Zero Emission and Zero Waste.

Indian Army Inks Pact with Assam Government

- The Indian Army signed an agreement with the Government of Assam to offer the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) at 8 medical colleges and hospitals in Assam.
- The Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare has approved the empanelment of government medical colleges in Assam with the ECHS.
- It will facilitate the cashless and capless treatment of almost 12 lakh beneficiaries.
- The Assam Cancer Care Foundation (ACCF), which is an Assam government and TATA Trust initiative, has also been impanelled with ECHS.

BANKING

RBI to Issue Green Bonds

- The Reserve Bank of India on 06 January 2023 announced that maiden Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs) would be issued in two tranches of Rs 8,000 crore each on 25 January and 09 February 2023.
- The central government is issuing these sovereign green bonds as part of its total market borrowing. These bonds are being issued to promote green infrastructure.
- Sovereign green bonds worth Rs 8000 crore will be issued on 25 January 2023. In this, green bonds worth Rs 4000 crore will be issued for 5 years and sovereign green bonds worth Rs 4000 crore will be issued for 10 years.

- Sovereign Green Bonds worth Rs 8000 crores will be issued as the next instalment on 09 February 2023.
- Sovereign Green Bonds are bonds that are used by the government to finance projects that have a positive impact on the environment.
- The Green Bond was launched in 2007 by the European Investment Bank and the World Bank.
- A Green Bond is an instrument that helps in raising funds for green projects.

Axis Bank Partners with OPEN

- India's third largest private sector bank, Axis Bank has partnered with the world's fastest-growing digital banking enterprise, Open Financial Technologies Pvt Ltd (OPEN) to provide a fully native digital current account journey for its customers.

- Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs), freelancers, homepreneurs, influencers and more would benefit from the fully digital current account.

- This is Axis Bank's first-ever partnership with a fintech player to launch a fully digital current account.

- OPEN operates SME neo-banking platform Open Money, the embedded finance platform, Zwitch and the enterprise digital banking platform for banks, BankingStack.

- The authentication process of the digital current account will be completely online using PAN (permanent account number) and Aadhaar followed by a Video KYC (know your customer).

Annapurna Finance Pvt Applies for A Universal Bank License

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has received an application from Odisha-based Annapurna Finance Pvt Ltd (AFPL), formerly known as Annapurna Microfinance Pvt Ltd under the Guidelines for 'on tap' Licensing of Universal Banks in the Private Sector.

- As per the RBI's 'on tap' licensing guidelines, the initial minimum paid-up voting equity capital for a universal bank should be Rs 500 crore.

- In 2021, the RBI announced a 5-member Standing External Advisory Committee, headed by former RBI deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath, for evaluating applications for universal banks and small finance banks.

SEBI Issues Debt Broker License to Goldenpi Technologies

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has issued a debt broker license to Bengaluru-based fintech firm GoldenPi Technologies.
- With this, GoldenPi became the first online bond platform provider to receive a debt brokerage license from SEBI.
- In Nov 2022, SEBI introduced regulations for online debt trading platforms which stated that

no company or individual shall act as an online bond platform provider (OBP) without the certificate of registration as a stock broker under the SEBI Regulations, 2021.
- Currently, the Zerodha-backed company offers more than 100+ bonds and debentures on its online platform in the form of daily listings.

ECONOMY

Third Largest Auto Market Globally

- According to the latest Nikkei Asia industry data,India has overtaken Japan to become the third largest auto market for the first time.
- India sales volumes are expected to increase further with the inclusion of pending sales figures for the fourth quarter for commercial vehicles.
- Most of the new autos sold in India last year consisted of vehicles powered by gasoline, including hybrid vehicles.
- In 2021, China topped the global auto market with sales of 26.27 million vehicles.
- The US stood second with 15.4 million vehicles sold, followed by Japan with 4.44 million units.

SPORTS

Maharashtra Open Tennis Tournament in Pune

- The Netherlands' Tallon Griekspoor defeated Frenchman Benjamin Bonzi to win his maiden ATP World Tour title.

- Grikspoor won a thrilling 4-6 7-5 6-3 title against his French opponent in two hours and 16 minutes to clinch the fifth edition of Tata Open Maharashtra title.

- It has been almost a decade since the Netherlands won a singles title on Tour.

- South Asia's only ATP 250 was organised by the Maharashtra State Lawn Tennis Association (MSLTA) in association with the Government of Maharashtra for the fifth year in Pune.

AWARDS & PRIZES

‘Best Police Units’ Award

- Nagpur, Jalna district police and Nagpur city police in Maharashtra have bagged the ‘Best Police Unit’ awards for 2021 in the state under different classes for maintaining law and order, use of modern technology, evolving community policing and administration.
- The Jalna police got the award in ‘Class A’ and the Nagpur police in ‘Class B’, as per the winners announced by Additional Director General of Police (law and order) Kulwant Sarangal.
- Police units with less than 6,100 Indian Penal Code cases are grouped in ‘Class A’, while those with more than 6,100 IPC cases are grouped in ‘Class B’, according to a police circular.

OBITUTARY

Veteran Sinologist Janaki Ballabh

- Veteran Sinologist Janaki Ballabh passed away. He was at the age of 94.
- He was closely associated with India’s independence movement.
- He was married to Shayma Ballabh, who worked as the first Hindi announcer at Radio Beijing.
- He was also the first Indian to have been given long-term residency in China along with his wife.
- He spent 5 years in Beijing working for Foreign Languages Press and stayed put in the country until 1961.
- In 1961, he was given the Peace and Friendship Award by the then-Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai.