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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 09-02-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

Google Introduces AI Chatbot 'Bard'

- Google has launched an Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered chatbot named "Google Bard"to compete with ChatGPT.
- Bard is built on Google's existing language model LaMDA, the language model for the firm's Dialog Application System.
- According to Google, it will be used by a group of testers first, after which Bard will be introduced to the general public.
- Bard has been developed to compete with the currently fastest growing user application, ChatGPT, which has overtaken platforms such as Tik Tok and Instagram.
- Through Bard, users can access complex information in simple language as before, not only that, but also get fresh, high-quality and accurate information from Google's chatbot.

Ladakh's First Biodiversity Heritage Site

- Yaya Tso has been declared as the first Biodiversity Heritage Site of Ladakh.
- Yaya Tso is a lake situated at an altitude of 4,820 metres in Ladakh which is known as the paradise of birds.
- It is a nesting site for birds and animals such as bar-headed goose, black-necked stork and Brahminy duck. It is one of the highest breeding grounds of black-necked stork in India.
- Yaya Tso Lake has been declared as the first Biodiversity Heritage Site of Ladakh under Biodiversity Act by Chumathang Village Panchayat, Biodiversity Management Committee in association with Secure Himalaya Project.

Ministry Of Education Launched 'Yuva Sangam Portal'

- The Ministry of Education has launched a pilot project with the 'Yuva Sangam portal' under Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat.

- Under the project, 1000 youth in the age group of 18 to 30 years will be sent to youth exchange programs in the North East and other states of the country.

- Through Yuva Sangam, the youth of the North East will get an opportunity to know the tradition, culture, tourist places, food, language and diversity of the eight states of the country and the youth of other states of the country.

- Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the year 2015 on the occasion of Sardar Vallabh Patel's 140th birth anniversary and was launched by the finance minister in the budget for the financial year 2016-17.
- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Education.

BANKING

Reserve Bank Increased the Repo Rate

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the policy repo rate by 0.25 percent in the bi-monthly monetary policy review with the aim of bringing inflation under control.
- New repo rate has increased to 6.50 percent.
- The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth forecast for the current financial year 2022-23 has been increased by RBI from 6.8 percent to 7 percent.
- At the same time, in the next financial year 2023-24, the growth rate in gross domestic product (GDP) has been estimated to be 6.4 percent.
- RBI has estimated retail inflation to be 6.5 per cent in the current financial year and 5.3 per cent in the next financial year.

Bajaj Allianz Launches Industry-First ‘Global Health Care’ Plan

- ’Bajaj Allianz General Insurance in collaboration with Allianz Partners has announced the launch of a new health insurance product ‘Global Health Care’.
- It is a comprehensive health indemnity insurance product that provides seamless cover to the policyholder for planned as well as emergency treatment available for domestic and international usage.
- The Unique Selling Proposition (USP) of the product is that it allows insured members to plan any treatment abroad or in India availing the best medical facilities anywhere across the globe.
- It is available with two plans namely ‘Imperial Plan’ and ‘Imperial Plus Plan’ offering international and domestic Covers.
- The primary differentiator between these plans is that the Imperial Plus is a high-end variant with higher sum insured options offered along with enhanced features.
- The domestic cover for ‘Imperial Plan’ and ‘Imperial Plus Plan’ provides in-patient hospitalisation treatment, and the pre- and post-hospitalisation expenses.

SPORTS

Australia's Aaron Finch Announces Retirement

- Australia's T20 World Cup-winning captain Aaron Finch has announced his retirement from the T20 Internationals, this brings an end to his international cricket career for Australia spanning 12 years.
- Finch captained Australia to their maiden ICC World T20 title in 2021.
- Finch made his international debut in 2011 in a T20 International match against England. He made his ODI debut in 2013 against Sri Lanka.
- He made his Test debut against Pakistan in 2018.

AWARDS & PRIZES

ATD Best Awards 2023

- Country's largest power generation company NTPC Limited has been conferred with 'ATD Best Awards 2023' by Association for Talent Development (ATD), USA.
- The NTPC which was earlier known as National Thermal Power Corporation of India is owned by the Government of India.
- NTPC Limited has won this award for the sixth time for showcasing enterprise success in the area of talent development.
- The ATD Best Awards recognize organisations that demonstrate talent development across the enterprise.
- NTPC has been successful in creating an ecosystem, which empowers the employees to enhance their skills.
- The award includes small and large private, public and non-profit organizations from around the world.
- Association for Talent Development, USA is the world's largest association in the field of talent development and ATD's Best of Award is considered the most prestigious award in learning and development.

'Mathrubhumi Book of the Year' Award

- Author Dr Peggy Mohan has won the 'Mathrubhumi Book of the Year' award during the 4th edition of Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters (MBIFL 2023).
- He has been given this award for his book 'Wanderers, Kings and Merchants', which portrays the development of language as a result of migration.
- In this award, he was given a statuette and two lakh rupees as a cash prize.
- The award was presented to Dr Peggy Mohan by Nobel Laureate Abdulrazak Gurnah at the closing ceremony of MBIFL 2023.
- She is a Trinidadian-born writer and a linguist.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

MD and CEO of Canara Bank

- The Central Government has appointed K Satyanarayana Raju as the new Managing Director and CEO of the state-owned Canara Bank.
- He will replace LV Prabhakar, who resigned from his post on 31 December 2022.
- He was working as Executive Director in Canara Bank since March 2021.
- Satyanarayana Raju has vast experience in Branch Banking, Corporate Credit, Retail Credit etc.

Indian-American Woman Elected as President of Harvard Law Review

- Apsara A Iyer, a second-year student at Harvard Law School, has been elected as the President of the prestigious Harvard Law Review.
- She has become the first woman to be named to the post in the prestigious publication's 136-year-long history.
- Iyer will replace Priscilla Coronado.
- Iyer was elected the 137th president of the Harvard Law Review, which was founded in 1887

and is one of the oldest student-run legal scholarship publications.
- The Law Review, operated under the Harvard Law School, is an organisation that reviews and selects articles published in the legal field.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

'NISAR' Satellite Made by ISRO-NASA

- The National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA) handed over the payload for the NISAR (NASA-Isro Synthetic Aperture Radar) satellite to Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

- The mission will help study Earth's land and ice surfaces in greater detail than ever before.

- This SUV-sized payload will be carried in a special cargo container for the 14,000 km flight to the UR Rao Satellite Center in Bengaluru.

- This is an important step in better understanding the Earth and the changing climate.

- It will provide important information on the Earth's crust, ice sheets and ecosystems.
- The NISAR spacecraft will be integrated into the satellite bus at the UR Rao Satellite Center for launch.