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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 11-04-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

World's First Asian King Vulture Conservation and Breeding Center

- Uttar Pradesh has set up a state-of-the-art Jatayu Conservation and Breeding Center (JCBC) for the critically endangered Asian king vulture, the first of its kind in the world.
- It is located in the Maharajganj district of Uttar Pradesh and is spread over 1.5 hectares.
- The JCBC is designed to maintain a sustainable population of Asian king vultures by breeding them in captivity and releasing them into the wild.
- The Asian king vulture is protected under the Wildlife Protection Act and is listed as critically endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.
- The Forest Department has partnered with the Bombay Natural History Society for technical guidance.

IndiaGrid Launches First Battery Energy Storage System

- India's first listed power sector infrastructure investment trust, India Grid Trust has commissioned its first battery energy storage system (BESS) project coupled with its solar panels at the Dhule substation in Maharashtra.
- The project will meet the substation's auxiliary consumption requirement.
- The BESS solution, coupled with solar generation, also acts as a prototype for expanding its presence in energy transition opportunities in the sector.
- IndiGrid is an Indian power sector infrastructure investment trust (InvIT), sponsored by KKR & Sterlite Power (SPTL).

Anaivarukkum IIT M Initiative for Government School Students

- Tamil Nadu (TN) Chief Minister (CM) Shri M K Stalin launched Anaivarukkum IITM' (IIT-M for All) the initiative of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Chennai, to connect the institution

with one lakh government school students in TN studying in rural locations to electronic science.
- He also announced a new talent support scheme, Thiranari Thervu Thittam, for state-run school students that carries a Rs 1,000 monthly stipend.
- Thiranari Thervu Thittam means a scheme to spot and nurture talent.
- The objective is to encourage and help Tamil Nadu government schools students to continue their higher education without hurdles.
- A stipend of Rs 1,000 would be provided every month until the students complete Class 12.
- They would also get Rs 12,000 as stipend annually during their under-graduation and post-graduation.

KSINC Launches Solar-Powered Tourist Vessel Sooryamshu

- The Kerala Shipping and Inland Navigation Corporation (KSINC) has introduced its first solar-powered tourist vessel named 'Sooryamshu' in Kochi backwaters, Kerala.

- The ₹3.95-crore vessel that can carry up to 100 passengers was built at a yard in Sri Lanka and is among the few in Kochi whose safety and allied features are certified by the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS).
- The vessel will have a 6-hour day cruise priced at ₹799 per person in which it will operate in the Marine Drive-Kadamakudy corridor and later 10 km into the sea.
- KSINC is a Government of Kerala undertaking that oversees the shipping and inland navigation matters of the state.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

'Kashi' Declared First Tourism and Cultural Capital of SCO

- 'Kashi'(Varanasi) has been declared the first tourism and cultural capital of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

- The declaration was made by a meeting of the SCO heads of Tourism Administrations held in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh (UP).

- The initiative will garner more attention by highlighting the spiritualism, mysticism, and learning of Kashi which is also the cradle of Indian civilization.

- The meeting also adopted the Action Plan for "Year of Tourism Development in the SCO Space in 2023.
- The next meeting of the SCO Heads of Tourism Administrations will be held in Kazakhstan in 2024.

BANKING

RBI Allows Pre-Sanctioned Credit Lines through UPI

- The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) governor Mr Shaktikanta Das proposed to expand scope of United Payments Interface (UPI) by permitting operations of pre-sanctioned credit lines by banks through UPI.
- UPI is a robust payment platform supporting an array of features.
- Presently it handles 75% of the retail digital payments volume in India.
- The UPI system has been leveraged to develop products and features aligned to India's payments digitisation goals.
- In other words, the UPI network will facilitate payments financed by credit from banks.
- This can reduce the cost of such offerings and help in the development of unique products for Indian markets.

IIFL Finance Secures $100 million from EDC and Deutsche Bank

- Fairfax-backed, leading Mumbai-based non-banking financial company (NBFC), IIFL Finance Limited (IIFL), has secured USD 100 million in long-term funding, jointly, from Export Development Canada (EDC) and Deutsche Bank.
- The NBFC secured USD 50 million from EDC and USD 50 million from Deutsche Bank, respectively.
- The deal was structured under the aegis of Deutsche Bank as mandated lead arranger, book runner and co-financier.
- This would also be IIFL's second loan from EDC. IIFL Finance had raised USD 400 million through its maiden dollar bond issue in February 2020.
- It was able to buy back the maximum possible amount, as approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), with the remaining amount due for maturity in April 2023.

AWARDS & PRIZES

International Prize in Statistics 2023

- Kalyampudi Radhakrishna Rao, an Indian-American statistician won the 2023 International Prize in Statistics.
- Rao will be honoured with the award at the International Statistical Institute's World Statistics Congress in Ottawa, Canada in July.
- The prize will be awarded for Rao's groundbreaking paper, 'The Information and Accuracy Obtained in the Estimation of Statistical Parameters', published in 1945 in the Bulletin of the Calcutta Mathematical Society.
- The award recognizes individuals or teams who have made significant contributions to science, technology and human welfare through the use of statistics.
- The award carries an $80,000 cash prize and is presented once every two years.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

A Book Titled ‘The Great Bank Robbery’

- A New Book Titled ‘The Great Bank Robbery’ is authored by V Pattabhi Ram and Sabyasachee Dash.
- It was Co-authored by Pattabhi Ram and Published by Rupa Publications India
- In ‘The Great Bank Robbery’, the authors, both chartered accountants, explore how a bank works, the scandals that have rocked the banking world and focus on the role played by auditors, bankers, credit raters and directors.
- Set in 2036, the novel has been written in a conversational style.
- Authors have cited eleven major financial scams in post-independent India to highlight how vast amounts of public money have vanished from banks over the last few decades.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Homeopathy Day

- World Homeopathy Day is observed every year on 10 April.
- It is celebrated to mark the birth anniversary of Dr. Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of Homeopathy.
- The day is celebrated to spread knowledge of homeopathy medicine in public health.
- The World Homeopathy Day 2023 theme is ‘One Health, One Family’.
- The Central Council for Research in Homeopathy (CCRH) under the Ministry of AYUSH organized a scientific conference on the occasion in New Delhi.
- The conference included sessions on policy aspects, advances in homeopathy, research evidence and clinical experiences in homeopathy.

OBITUARY

Renowned Theatre Actress Jalabala Vaidya

- Noted theatre actress and co-founder of Akshara Theater Jalabala Vaidya passed away.
- Jalabala Vaidya started her theatrical journey in 1968 with 'Full Circle'.
- Vaidya was awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi's Tagore Award, the Delhi Natya Sangh Award and the Andhra Pradesh Natya Akademi Award.
- Vaidya's passing is a great loss to the theatre community, and his legacy will continue to inspire and influence generations of theatre artists to come.

Last Surviving Nazi Trial Lawyer Ben Ferenczz

- Ben Ferencz, the last surviving prosecutor of the Nuremberg Trials passed away.

- The Nuremberg Trials were held after World War II to try Nazi leaders for war crimes, crimes against peace, and crimes against humanity.

- Ferencz was a key member of the prosecution team and helped secure convictions against high-ranking Nazis, including Einsatzgruppen leaders who oversaw mass murders of Jews and others.

- Ferencz was also a witness to the atrocities committed in Nazi concentration and labour camps, and helped document these crimes in detail.