DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 18-04-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

Animal Pandemic Preparedness Initiatives

- The 'Animal Pandemic Preparedness Initiative (APPI)' will be launched by the Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, Shri Parshottam Rupala.
- Shri Rupala will also launch the World Bank-funded Animal Health System Support for One Health (AHSSOH) project.
- Both will be launched under the aegis of the National One Health Mission at India Habitat Center, New Delhi.
- The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying has signed a collaborative project on AHSSOH with the World Bank.
- It aims to create an ecosystem for a better animal health management system using the One Health approach.
- The project will be rolled out in five states with the aim of enhancing the capacity building of stakeholders engaged in animal health and disease management.
- Over the next five years, the collaborative project will be implemented as a Central sector scheme, with a budget of Rs 1228.70 Cr.

Union Minister Shri Nitin Gadkari Inspects Asia's Longest 'Zojila Tunnel'

- Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari inspected Zojila Tunnel, Asia's longest tunnel which will establish all-weather connectivity between the Union Territories (UT) of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).

- Currently the average travel time to cross the Zojila Pass sometimes takes 3 hours, after the completion of this tunnel the travel time will come down to 20 minutes.

- The reduction in travel time will ultimately result in fuel savings.

- The Zojila tunnel will be India's longest road tunnel and is expected to be Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel, boasting a length of 15 km.

- A connecting tunnel from Z-Morh on NH1 to the Zojila tunnel will be built in the Zojila Ghats between Sonmarg and Kargil.
- The tunnel is being built at a cost of more than 4,600 crores.
- It is expected to be completed by December 2023.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Founding Member of The International Big Cats Alliance

- Nepal has become a founding member of the International Big Cats Alliance launched by India.
- The International Big Cats Alliance aims to conserve seven big cat species including tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards, cheetahs, jaguars and pumas.
- Nepal's tiger population has seen a significant increase, increasing from 121 in 2010 to 335 in 2022.
- Nepal successfully achieved its target of doubling the tiger population by 2022, as done during the first Tiger Summit in 2010 in St. Petersburg.
- The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) was launched by the Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi on 09 April 2023.

BANKING

SEBI Unveils its New Logo on the 35th Foundation Day

- Capital Market Regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) unveiled its new logo on its 35th Foundation Day at a ceremony conducted at the SEBI Head Office in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- The new SEBI logo retains its traditional blue colour palette.
- The new logo reflects the combination of rich traditions of SEBI and new data and technology-based approach to all 3 areas of its mandate in the securities market.
- These areas are the development and regulation of the securities market and investor protection.

YES Bank Becomes First Indian Company with Over 50 Lakh

Shareholders

- Private sector lender YES Bank has become the first Indian company to have over 50 lakh shareholders, according to the shareholding pattern of the bank on March 2023.
- Tata Power is at number 2 in terms of maximum number of shareholders, with a total of 38.5 lakh people investing in its shares.
- On the other hand, Reliance Industries is at number 3 in this list with 33.6 lakh crore shareholders.
- This was an increase from 1 lakh shareholders as of December 2022, most likely owing to the end of the 3-year lock-in period for shareholders that held equity shares of the bank when it underwent the reconstruction scheme in March 2020.

First Private InVIT to Get Listed on National Stock Exchange

- IRB Infrastructure Trust, sponsored by IRB Infrastructure Developers Ltd was listed on the National Stock Exchange (NSE) becoming the first private InVIT to be listed.
- The move comes after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) listed guidelines on the listing framework for non-listed infrastructure investment trusts (InVIT).
- The valuation of the trust units was determined based on third-party evaluation and further endorsed by the Trust’s investors as well.
- The value ascertained comes to around 16 times FY24 revenue, which will further keep appreciating with more projects coming in.
- Infrastructure investment trusts, popularly known as InVITs, are a kind of hybrid securities.
- They are technically defined as a collective investment scheme similar to a mutual fund, which allows individuals and institutional investors to directly invest in infrastructure projects.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

Second Strongest Tyre Brand in The World

- MRF Ltd has emerged as the second-strongest tyre brand in the world according to the latest report by Brand Finance on the 'Most Valuable and Strongest Tyre Brands' in the world.

- MRF has scored high in almost all parameters and is also recognized as the second fastest growing tire brand in the world.
- It has scored 83.2 out of 100 in brand strength and has been awarded AAA- brand rating.
- MRF scored high in the Sustainability Perception Value and is the only Indian tire manufacturer to feature in the top 10.
- Brand Finance's annual report on the Most Valuable and Strongest Automobile, Auto Component, Tire and Mobility 2023 analyzes the value of brands across these industries.

Second Largest Export Destination and Third Largest Source of Imports

- According to the annual trade data released by the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India, UAE is the second most important export destination of India.
- The US and the UAE retained their first and second positions, respectively, as India's top export destinations during the financial year 2022-23.
- India's total exports of goods and services grew by six per cent during the fiscal year that ended last month.
- The commerce ministry also released India's trade data for March 2023, which showed UAE as second only to the US among India's export destinations.
- The UAE ranked third among India's import sources in March 2023, after China and Russia.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Nandini Gupta Crowned Femina Miss India 2023

- Nandini Gupta of Rajasthan won the title of Femina Miss India World 2023.
- The first runner-up of the competition was Shreya Poonja from Delhi and the second runner-up was Thounaojam Strela Luwang from Manipur.
- The 59th edition of India's most prestigious pageant marked the Grand Finale of Femina Miss India World 2023.

- Nandini Gupta will represent India at the 71st Miss World pageant, which is going to be held in the United Arab Emirates.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

European Space Agency Set to Launch Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer

- The European Space Agency (ESA) is all set to launch the Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer, or Juice, mission from its spaceport in French Guiana on an Ariane 5 launcher.
- Planned to reach Jupiter in 2031, the mission aims to carry out a detailed exploration of the Solar System's largest planet and its icy moons, which potentially have habitable environments.
- NASA, the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and the Israel Space Agency have also contributed to the JUICE mission.
- ESA's Juice mission will make detailed observations of gas giant Jupiter and its 3 large ocean-bearing moons – Ganymede, Callisto and Europa.
- JUICE will use a powerful suite of remote sensing, geophysical and in situ instruments.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Hemophilia Day

- World Hemophilia Day is observed every year on 17 April.
- It is to mark the birth anniversary of Frank Schnabel, who founded the World Federation of Hemophilia.
- The main purpose of this day is to raise awareness and provide information about hemophilia and other bleeding disorders.
- The theme for World Haemophilia Day 2023 is 'Access for All: Partnership, Policy, Progress - Engaging Governments to Integrate Inherited Bleeding Disorders into National Policy.'
- The theme emphasizes the importance of partnership and collaboration between various stakeholders, including governments, in ensuring access to appropriate care and treatment for individuals with hemophilia and other hereditary bleeding disorders.
- The theme also highlights the need to integrate these conditions into national policies to improve the diagnosis, treatment and management of these disorders.

- The first World Hemophilia Day was observed in 1989.

OBITUARY

Renowned National Award-Winning Actress Uttara Baokar

- Noted actress and theatre artist Uttara Baokar passed away at the age of 79 in Pune city of Maharashtra.

- She acted in several notable plays, such as Padmavati in Mukyhamantri, Mena in Mena Gurjari, Desdemona in Shakespeare's Othello.

- She has appeared in popular TV shows like Udaan, Antaral, X Zone, Rishtey Kora Kaagaz, Nazarana, Jassi Jaissi Koi Nahin, Kashmakash Zindagi Ki and Jabb Love Hua.

- She won the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for Acting (Hindi theatre).

- In 1988 she won the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actress for Ek Din Achanak.