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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 20-01-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

India's First National Assessment Regulator

- The National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) has notified India's first national assessment regulator, PARAKH.
- It will work on setting norms, standards and guidelines for student assessment and evaluation for all recognised school boards in the country.
- The regulator aims to set up assessment guidelines for all boards to help remove disparities in scores of students enrolled with different state boards.
- PARAKH has been launched as part of the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 which envisaged a standard-setting body to advise school boards regarding new assessment patterns and the latest research, and promote collaborations between them.
- The Centre will also manage India's participation in international assessments such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

First Indian Union Territory to Completely Shift to e-Governance

- Jammu and Kashmir has become the first Union Territory of India to go completely digital.
- Presently all government and administrative services in Jammu and Kashmir are being provided digitally only.
- Jammu and Kashmir is also emerging as a model of digital government in the country with a transparent and accountable governance system.
- The main objective of making government services online is to make people online.

First Global Tourism Investors Summit

- The first Global Tourism Investors Summit will be organised by the Union Ministry of Tourism from 10 April to 12 April 2023 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.
- The aim of the conference is to bring together global businesses, think tanks and policy makers to understand and explore tourism business opportunities in India.
- The event focused on promoting India as an investment destination for travel, tourism and hospitality by identifying state-specific investment potential and discussing ways to promote sustainable tourism.

BANKING

Indian Bank to Hold Special Rupee Vostro Accounts

- Indian Bank has received the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) regulatory approval to hold special rupee Vostro accounts of 3 banks from Sri Lanka.
- The public sector bank, which has had a long presence in the South Asian Island nation, is expected to activate the special Vostro accounts in about a week.
- A Vostro account in local currency would allow Sri Lanka to import from India without dipping into its declining dollar supply.
- The INR Vostro facility is part of the special trade settlement mechanism finalised by the RBI in July 2022.
- The Vostro accounts would also help Sri Lanka to utilise the rupee lines extended by India.
- It would contribute towards stabilising the Lankan economy.

Nuego Forms Strategic Partnership with Paytm

- India's first premium electric intercity coach services brand, NueGo, has partnered with Paytm, India's leading payments and financial services company launching a convenient bus ticket booking facility for its customers.
- This partnership would allow commuters to digitally reserve the seat of their choice in all NueGo buses across India, providing a seamless digital booking experience.
- Paytm will enable commuters to book tickets without being physically present inside the bus or at the ticket counter, making the travel experience even more seamless.
- NueGo, the flagship inter-city electric mobility coach brand of GreenCell Mobility is currently playing across India primarily on the Bhopal-Indore, Delhi-Chandigarh and Delhi-Jaipur routes.

Amazon Pay Partners with TSSPDCL

- Amazon Pay announced an association with Telangana Southern State Power Distribution Company Limited (TSSPDCL) to simplify electricity bill payments for TSSPDCL customers.
- With this association, Amazon aims to make electricity bill payments instant, convenient, and rewarding for millions of customers.
- Through this association, TSSPDCL customers can now pay their electricity bills on Amazon using Amazon Pay without any convenience fee and experience secure and seamless transactions without the hassle of standing in billing queues.
- The customers also can earn cash backs on their first bill payment and exciting rewards on their future bill payments.
- After filing the necessary details, customers can choose their preferred payment modes such as UPI, Amazon Pay Later, Credit Cards, Debit Cards, Amazon Pay Balance or Net-banking to instantly complete the transaction.

VTB Bank Launches Direct Payments in Rupees

- VTB - Russia's second-largest bank has launched a mechanism to receive direct payments in Rupees discarding the conventional mechanism involving Dollars and Euros, in a major boost to the India-Russia trade.
- With this, Russian SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) will now be able to transact in INR, thus simplifying the payments while dealing with their Indian trading partners.
- The mechanism of direct settlements allows fixing the price of a product and the payment in the national currency and to receive individual quotes on market terms.
- It also eliminates preliminary coordination of the
- VTB opened special Vostro accounts in India to facilitate Russian-Indian trade in November 2022.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

Global Fire Power Index 2023

- The Global Firepower Report 2023 has ranked India as the 4th most powerful army in the world.

- 145 countries are ranked this year in the Global Firepower Report.
- Global Firepower ranks countries based on troop strength, national resources, financial status, logistics and geographic scale.
- The most powerful country in the world is the United States of America, followed by Russia, China and India.
- According to the Global Firepower Military Index 2023, Turkey has once again emerged as the most powerful country in the Middle East and North African region. Turkey has been placed at the 11th position in the global ranking.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Bahrain's Isa Award for Service to Humanity

- Himalayan Cataract Project Co-Founder and noted Nepali ophthalmologist Dr Sanduk Ruit has won the Isa Award-2021-2022 for Service to Humanity, a top civilian award of Bahrain.
- The award carries a cash prize of US\$1 million, a certificate of merit and a gold medallion.
- Dr. Ruit is a pioneer in providing high quality microsurgical procedures in remote eye camps.
- He has been instrumental in making modern eye care affordable and accessible to countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.
- He is a recipient of the Padma Shri award by the Government of India, the National Order of Merit of Bhutan as well as the Ramon Magsaysay Award.
- The Government of Australia conferred on him 'The Order of Australia' in 2007.

DEFENCE

Kalashnikov AK-203 Assault Rifles in India

- The manufacturing of Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles has recently started in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh by an Indo-Russian joint venture.
- Indo-Russian Rifles Private Limited plans to ensure 100 percent production of AK-203 rifles in India.
- India is the first country to start production of the world-famous brand AK-200-series assault rifles.
- The first batch of 7.62 mm Kalashnikov AK-203 assault rifles has been produced by the Korwa Ordnance Factory in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh.

- The AK-203 assault rifle is considered to be the latest and most advanced version of the AK-47 rifle.
- It is a 7.62×39mm variant from the AK-100 rifle family.

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Disaster Response Force

- The Raising Day of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is celebrated every year on 19 January.
- 18th edition of Raising Day of NDRF has been celebrated on 2023.
- NDRF was established in the year 2006 under the 'Disaster Management Act, 2005' with 6 battalions.
- The objective is to provide prompt assistance in natural and man-made calamities.
- It will also establish coordination between different security agencies involved in relief and rescue operations.

OBITUTARY

Renowned Assamese Poet Nilamani Phukan

- Renowned Assamese poet and Jnanpith awardee Nilamani Phukan passed away at Guwahati. He was at the age of 89.
- He was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1981 for his poetry collection 'Kabita'.
- He was conferred with the 56th Jnanpith Award 2020.
- The Government of India honoured him with the Padma Shri in 1990.
- His major works include Juria Henu Naami Aahe E Nodiyadi, Kabita and Gulapi Jamur Lagna.



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