DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 21-02-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

18th World Security Congress

- The 18th World Security Congress is being organised by the International Union of Railways (UIC) and Railway Protection Force (RPF) from 21 February to 23 February in Jaipur.
- The 18th edition of this Congress is focused on the theme of 'Railway Safety Strategy: Responses and Vision for the Future'.
- It will be attended by concerned officials from UIC, partner international organisations, Indian Railways, RPF and senior police officers from India besides security heads from railway organisations across the globe.
- The Congress is divided into 4 sessions, which include the topics 'Safety of critical assets and goods', 'Human safety approaches', 'Best railway safety equipment and practices around the world' and 'Vision 2030'.

Khajuraho Dance Festival Begin in Madhya Pradesh

- The 49th Khajuraho Dance Festival began in Khajuraho.
- Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangubhai Patel inaugurated 'Khajuraho Dance Festival-2023'. The festival will end on February 26.
- Madhya Pradesh State Rupankar Art Award will be given at the function and an exhibition of artefacts has also been organised at the venue.
- Under the Department of Culture, this festival is being organised with the joint efforts of Ustad Alladin Khan Academy of Music and Arts, Department of Tourism, Archaeological Survey of India, World Dance Alliance and Chhatarpur District Administration.

Indian Railways and India Post

- Rail Post Gati Shakti Express Cargo Service has been launched by Indian Railways.
- A Joint Parcel Product, Rail Post Gati Shakti Express Cargo Service, has formally been launched by Indian Railways and Indian Post.
- It is an initiative to providing seamless logistics for the service sector in the country.
- This is in compliance with the budget announcement for the financial year 2022-23.

- It has been launched on four sectors- Delhi to Kolkata, Bengaluru to Guwahati, Surat to Muzaffarpur and Hyderabad to Hazrat Nizamuddin.
- To take this initiative forward, a joint marketing team has been formed between Postal and Railways.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Sea Ice Cover Reaches Lowest Level in Antarctica

- According to the National Snow and Ice Data Center in the United States, Antarctica's sea ice extent was recorded at 2.2 million square kilometres last week, down from 2.27 million square kilometres as of February 24, 2022, the previous record.
- This is the lowest since records began in 1979.
- According to scientists, this is the second consecutive year when snow has melted up to 20 lakh square km in a day.
- The coldest region on Earth, 99 percent of Antarctica is covered with ice.

BANKING

HDFC Raises Rs 25,000 Crore- India’s Largest Rupee Bond Sale

- Housing Development Finance Corporation Ltd (HDFC) concluded a sale of 10-year non-convertible debentures (NCDs) worth Rs 25,000 crore, marking the largest domestic rupee bond issuance by a corporate in India.
- The housing financier’s bonds carry an annualised coupon or the rate of interest periodically paid out to investors of 7.97%.
- The 10-year benchmark government bond yield closed at 7.35% in the secondary market.
- The deal was arranged by ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank and ICICI Securities Primary Dealership.

- The issue was oversubscribed and received 92 bids amounting to 27,863 crores of which the company retained 55 investor bids totaling to Rs. 25,000 crores.

NSDC Partners with HDFC Life

- The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), working under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Government of India (GoI) has entered into a partnership with HDFC Life, India's life insurer, under the Skill India Mission, to support self-employment and augment entrepreneurial opportunities.
- As part of this collaboration, NSDC will support HDFC Life in inducting trained (https://www.hdfclife.com/) life insurance advisors and strengthening the last mile reach.
- The partnership will provide training to candidates undergoing the IC38 examination conducted by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) and drive skill enhancement.

DriveU Partners with SMC Insurance

- DriveU, a leading car driver service and a super-app for car owners, partnered with SMC Insurance Brokers Pvt. Ltd to provide car insurance for over 650,000 DriveU customers.

- Through this partnership, all the new and existing customers of DriveU will be able to buy or renew their car insurance easily.

- The collaboration will make the car insurance buying process simpler and more seamless for the customers.

- DriveU, is one step closer to rewarding the entire car ownership journey with every transaction on the DriveU platform further reducing the cost of owning a car and consolidating the needs of car owners under one roof.

BUSINESS

Surf Excel Becomes HUL's First $1 billion Brand

- Hindustan Unilever's Surf Excel detergent brand crossed a billion dollars in annual sales in 2022, the first brand in India's home and personal care category to reach that mark.

- Surf Excel posted more than ₹8,200 crore in annual sales last year, becoming also the first HUL brand to top that mark, driven by the company's increased focus towards premium products.

- HUL’s second largest brand is Brooke Bond at ₹5,000 crore annual sales.

- Launched around six decades ago, Surf tasted success early and became a market leader soon after being launched.

- HUL has introduced a number of other detergent brands in India to take on lower-priced products launched by rivals,but it always maintained the premium tag for Surf Excel.

AWARDS & PRIZES

BAFTA Awards 2023

- The 76th British Academy Film Awards, BAFTA (the British Academy of Film and Television Arts) Awards, were announced at an event held in London’s Royal Festival Hall.

- A German anti-war drama ‘All Quiet on the Western Front’, a screen adaptation of the 1928 novel by Erich Maria Remarque, won the most, including Best Picture and Best Director, with seven.

- Best film- ‘All Quiet on the Western Front’.

- Outstanding British film- ‘The Banshees of Inisherin’.

- Best documentary- ‘Navalny’.
- Best animated film- ‘Guillermo del Toro’s Pinocchio’.
- Best lead actress- ‘Cate Blanchett’ for the film TAR.
- Best lead actor- ‘Austin Butler’ for the film Elvis.

‘Prathista Puraskar – Digidhan Award’ from MeitY

- Karnataka Bank has won Prathista Puraskar under Digidhan Awards 2021-22.

- The bank has won the award for highest percentage in BHIM-UPI transactions in private sector bank category.
- The bank has won Prathista Puraskar under Digidhan Awards 2021-22 by the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- The bank is carrying out an accelerated digital drive under ‘KBL VIKAAS 2.0’.
- It is labelled as KBL-NxT.
- Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology gave the award to Gokuldas Pai, Chief Business Officer of the bank and Jagadeesh KS, Deputy General Manager – Delhi region, Karnataka Bank.

DEFENCE NEWS

Joint Military Exercise- ‘Dustlik’

- As part of the military-to-military exchange program between the Indian Army and the Uzbekistan Army, the fourth edition of the training exercise Dastlik (2023) began on 20 February.
- The exercise will be held at Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand till 05 March 2023.
- The Indian contingent in this bilateral exercise will be represented by the 14th Battalion the Garhwal Rifles, which is part of the Western Command.
- The Uzbekistan Army will be represented by troops from the North Western Military District of the Uzbekistan Army.
- Its purpose is to give impetus to the ever-growing military and diplomatic relations between the two countries.
- This exercise shows the strong resolve of both the countries to combat terrorism.

IMPORTANT DAYS

World Day of Social Justice

- The United Nations (UN) World Day of Social Justice is annually observed on February 20 to encourage people to look at how social justice affects poverty eradication.
- The theme this year of the World Day of Social Justice is ‘Overcoming Barriers and Unleashing Opportunities for Social Justice’.
- The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action for Social Development were reviewed by the UN member states a decade later in New York in 2005.
- Finally, 20th February was declared as the annual World Day of Social Justice by the United Nations on November 26, 2007.

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