DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 31-03-2023

NATIONAL NEWS

Regional Conference on Drug Trafficking and National Security

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a regional conference on 'Drug Trafficking and National Security' in Bengaluru.
- Representatives from 5 Southern States and 3 UT s attended the conference.
- During the meeting, emphasis was laid on various aspects like ways to curtail drug trafficking through maritime routes, stringent punitive action on drug traffickers, etc.
- The government has adopted a policy of zero tolerance against drugs to make a Drug-free India.
- Ministry of Home Affairs has adopted a three-pronged formula to deal with this menace, including strengthening the institutional structure, empowerment and coordination of all narcotics agencies and a comprehensive awareness campaign.
- The government is also considering for using la test technology in the fight against drugs.
- Satellite mapping will be used for the identification of areas cultivating opium.
- The cases of drugs will be investigated thoroughly from their source to destination to find out the entire network.

BANKING

IDFC First Bank Partners with Crunchfish

- IDFC First Bank has partnered with Swedish company Crunchfish to participate in the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) pilot programme to facilitate offline retail payments.

- This initiative will provide access to digital payments even when there is no network.

- The Crunchfish introduced this one-of-a-kind digital payment system for merchants and customers as part of the RBI's Regulatory Sandbox Program.

- This project will allow offline retail payments in India's payment ecosystem using a Digital Cash platform.

- IDFC FIRST Bank will be one of the first few banks to participate in HDFC Bank's pilot initiative.
- The RBI authorised the proposal to demonstrate offline payments between two banks.
- IDFC First Bank has signed a non-commercial Development and Demonstration Agreement to access the Digital Cash SDK.
- The terms of deployment will be regulated in a Software Licence Agreement.

CRIF Receives the RBI Licence

- CRIF Connect Private Limited, a subsidiary of credit bureau company CRIF S.p.A has received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to begin operations as a Non-Banking Financial Company- Account Aggregator (NBFC-AA).
- With CRIF's legacy, knowledge, and experience, CRIF Connect is uniquely positioned to benefit both consumers and financial institutions.
- Based on RBI-approved guidelines, it is an end-to-end encrypted platform that securely fetches and transfers a consumer's financial data based on their explicit consent between financial institutions, making data sharing extremely safe.
- The CRIF Connect application will be available on the web and on mobile devices, allowing users to view all their financial information in one place and to customise the information they want to share with the financial institution in real time.
- The services are used by more than 82,000 companies and 10 lakh consumers.
- CRIF is a global company specialising in credit bureau and business information, outsourcing and processing services, and credit solutions.

J&K Bank Signs Corporate Agency Agreement

- Jammu and Kashmir Bank (J&K Bank) has signed a corporate agency agreement with Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company to sell life insurance products to its customers, with effect from April 1, 2023.
- General Manager & Vertical Head (Cross Selling) Mr Narjay Gupta signed the agreement on representing J&K Bank, while, as, Chief Distribution Officer (Institutional Business) Mr Dheeraj Sehgal put in his signatures on behalf of Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company.
- The bank's reach especially in J&K, Ladakh and Bajaj Allianz products makes the tie-up beneficial not only for the customers but a win-win for both the institutions by enabling them to leverage each other strengths.

Geojit Financial Services Teams Up with ESAF Small Finance Bank

- Geojit Financial Services, a leading investment services company, has entered into an

agreement with ESAF Small Finance Bank (ESAF SFB) to offer a special 3-in-1 bundled account to the ESAF SFB customers.

- Under this one-of-its-kind 3-in-1 bundled account service, ESAF SFB savings account holders can open a Geojit demat account and trading account for free.

- The 3-in-1 bundled account comes with benefits such as zero demat account opening charges, flexible brokerage plans, AMC waiver till March 2024, no subscription charges on the trading account and an end-to-end digital account opening facility.

SPORTS

Asian Billiards Title

- Star Indian player Pankaj Advani defeated compatriot Brijesh Damani 5-1 in the final to retain his Asian Billiards title in the 100-up format at Qatar Billiards and Snooker Federation (QBSF) Academy.

- In the women's category, China's Bai Yulu won the title beating Panchaya Channoi of Thailand 3-0 in the final.

- This is the eighth Asian Billiards title for Advani.

- Last year, Advani had won the same title in Doha.

- Pankaj Advani had clinched his 25th gold medal on the world stage at the 2022 IBSF World Billiards Championship in Kuala Lumpur.

Saudi Arabian Grand Prix

- Mexican racing driver Sergio Perez has won the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix 2023 title.

- In the same Red Bull, his partner Max Verstappen secured the second position in the race.

- Seven-times world champion Lewis Hamilton finished fifth and Ferrari's Carlos Sainz came in sixth place.

AWARDS & PRIZES

President Biden Awards 2021 National Humanities Medals

- US President Joe Biden presented the 2021 National Humanities Medals, in conjunction with the National Medals of Arts.
- Indian-American Vera Mindy Chokalingam, professionally known as Mindy Kaling will award the 2021 National Humanities Medal among others.
- The National Medal of Arts is the highest award given to artists, arts patrons, and groups by the US government and honors exemplary individuals and organisations that have advanced the arts in America and offered inspiration to others through their distinguished achievement, support, or patronage.
- Mindy Kaling is an Emmy-nominated writer, producer, New York Times best-selling author, director, and actor.
- She has also co-created and co-written the popular Netflix show Never Have I Ever, the series about a first-generation Indian American teenager.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Director General of IAEA

- The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reappointed Mr Rafael Mariano Grossi as Director General (DG) for a second four-year term in office beginning in early December 2023.
- His second term starts on 3 December, 2023 and runs until 2 December 2027.
- He is the sixth Director General since the IAEA was established in 1957.
- He took up his first term of office on 2 December 2019, following the General Conference's approval of his appointment by the Board.

President Appoints 3 New Chief Justices for High Courts

- President of India Droupadi Murmu has approved the appointment of 3 new Chief Justices (CJ)

for the High Courts (HC) of Allahabad, Patna and Chhattisgarh.

- Justice Pritinker Diwaker, Judge of the Allahabad High Court (HC), has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Allahabad HC succeeding Justice Rajesh Bindal.

- Justice Ramesh Sinha, Senior Judge of the Allahabad HC,Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (UP) has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Chhattisgarh HC succeeding Justice Goutam Bhaduri.

- Justice K Vinod Chandran, Senior Judge of the Kerala High Court (HC), has been appointed as the Chief Justice of the Patna HC succeeding Sanjay Karol.
- The Chief Justice and Judges of the High Courts are to be appointed by the President under clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution.

Vice-President of UAE

- The President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, has appointed Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, his brother, as the Vice President of the country.

- The appointment is approved by the UAE Federal Supreme Council.

- Sheikh Mansour has been active in UAE politics since 2004, when he was appointed as Minister of Presidential Affairs.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

World's First 3D Printed Rocket 'Terran 1'

- The world's first 3D-printed rocket Terran 1 launched successfully on its third attempt, but failed to achieve orbit during second-stage separation.

- It was launched from Complex 16 at Canaveral's US Space Force Station.

- Despite sustained efforts, it failed to achieve orbit during second-stage separation & it crashed into the Atlantic Ocean.

- Terran 1's engines are powered by liquid oxygen and liquid natural gas.

- It is built by California aerospace startup Relativity Space.

- 85% of its mass is 3D printed with metal alloys, including the engines.
- It is made with the world’s largest 3D metal printers.

IMPORTANT DAYS

International Day of Zero Waste

- The United Nations General Assembly has announced that March 30 will be observed as the International Day of Zero Waste every year from 2023.

- the day aims to encourage sustainable consumption and production practices and help achieve the goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

- Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri organised the "Swachhotsav - 2023: Rally for Garbage Free Cities" in New Delhi.

- The theme of International Zero Waste Day 2023 – 'Achieving sustainable and environmentally sound practices to reduce and manage waste'.

- The International Day of Zero Waste provides an opportunity to raise awareness of the negative effects of waste on the environment, including landfills, pollution and resource depletion.