



# WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**AUGUST, 2022**

**Week-1**

**1-7 Aug, 2022**

★★ Useful for ★★

**CSE, ESE, PSUs, State Services Exams,  
SSC and Banking Exams**

1<sup>st</sup> AUGUST, 2022

## Ex VINBAX 2022 conducted between India and Vietnam

- **Context:** The 3rd edition of Vietnam-India bilateral army drill, “Exercise VINBAX 2022”, conducted at the Chandimandir Military Station.

### Key Highlights

- The third edition of Vietnam India Bilateral Army Exercise “Ex VINBAX 2022” was recently conducted at Chandimandir.
- The theme of “Ex VINBAX” was ‘employment and deployment of engineers’ company and a medical team as part of a United Nations contingent for peace-keeping operations.
- The Indian Army is being represented by troops from the 105 Engineer Regiment.
- VINBAX exercise is commonly defined as the India and Vietnam army's collaboration, which helps reinforce the India-Vietnam defence and security cooperation and endorses India-Vietnam relations.
- It is considered as a vital step taken by India and Vietnam and is also the first of a kind military exercise among the two nations.

## Gati Shakti University Bill

- **Context:** The Lok Sabha recently passed a bill that seeks to transform the National Rail and Transportation University into a central university to be called Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya.

### Key Highlights

- The Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, which also seeks to expand the scope of the deemed university from beyond the railways to cover the entire transport sector to support the ambitious growth and modernisation in the field, was passed.
- Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya will be a multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional institute.
- The plan is to unify different departments to create a new infrastructure where various transport sector

elements — railways, road, waterways, aviation and port along with information and technology — will coordinate with each other on the platform of Gati Shakti Mission.

- Focus of the institute will be on five major aspects — transport focussed courses, skill development, applied research, technology development and transport economics and infrastructure financing.
- The university will also take additional measures for providing high quality teaching, research and skill development in diverse disciplines related to transportation, technology and management including establishing centres in India and abroad.
- The headquarters will be in Vadodara there will be campuses across the country which will be developed as centers of excellence.
- Currently, the National Rail and Transportation University located in Vadodara is a deemed-to-be-institution.
- The university is named after the government's flagship Rs 100-lakh crore PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan for multi-modal connectivity.
- The Gati Shakti Master Plan is essentially a digital platform bringing together 16 ministries, including roadways and railways for integrated planning and coordinated implementation of infrastructure connectivity projects.

## Government constituted V.K. Paul task Force for Monkeypox

- **Context:** The central government has constituted a task force in the wake of monkeypox cases.

### Key Highlights

- The task force has been constituted to monitor and provide guidance on the expansion of diagnostic facilities and to explore vaccination for the infection in the country.
- The team will be headed by V.K. Paul, member (Health), NITI Aayog, and will have senior officials from the health ministry and government, including health secretary Rajesh Bhushan.

- The task force will also help and guide the WHO on diagnostic facilities expansion and to explore vaccination in the country.
- National Institute of Virology (NIV) recently confirmed the first case of monkeypox fatality in the country.
- So far, Kerala has reported four monkeypox cases.

### About Monkeypox

- Monkeypox is a zoonotic disease caused by a virus, which belongs to the same family of viruses that causes smallpox.
- The disease is endemic in regions like West and Central Africa, but lately, cases have been reported from non-endemic countries too, according to the WHO that has declared Monkeypox a worldwide health emergency.

2<sup>nd</sup> AUGUST, 2022

## AlphaFold predicted structure of 200 million proteins

- **Context:** Alphabet's Deepmind Technologies recently released 3D predicted structures of over 200 million proteins.

### Key Highlights

- DeepMind, a company based in London and owned by Google, recently announced that it had predicted the three-dimensional structures of more than 200 million proteins using AlphaFold.
- AlphaFold predicts the 3D shape of proteins based on their amino acid sequences. AlphaFold is an AI-based protein structure prediction tool. It is based on a computer system called deep neural network.
- It uses processes based on "training, learning, retraining and relearning". By using this method, AlphaFold has now predicted the structures of the entire 214 million unique protein sequences deposited in the Universal Protein Resource(UniProt) database.
- By understanding the shape which any given protein folds into, scientists can know how that protein operates, thus its role in the cell.

- AlphaFold was designed to accelerate that process, providing in this latest data release more than 200 million predicted structures of proteins found in plants, bacteria, animals, and other organisms.

## India to participate in Exercise Pitch Black

- **Context:** India is one of 17 nations to participate in the Pitch Black air combat exercises.

### Key Highlights

- The exercise is organised by Australia in which different countries (17) participate.
- The biennial exercises are being conducted after a hiatus of four years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The air combat exercises are conducted by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and will see 2,500 personnel from 17 countries that will be engaging in Offensive Counter Air (OCA) and Defensive Counter Air (DCA) combat exercises.
- Exercise Pitch Black 2022 is the latest iteration of Exercise Pitch Black, a war game or warfare exercise that first started in Australia's Northern Territories in the 1980s between different RAAF units.
- Since then, Australia has invited international partners to practice combat readiness, interoperability, and new doctrines.
- The exercise has been held every two years.

## Kerala-based Federal bank first to list on the TIN 2.0 platform

- **Context:** Federal Bank, based in Kerala, is the first bank to list its Payment Gateway platform on "TIN 2.0 platform".

### Key Highlights

- Federal Bank partnered with the Central Board of direct taxes to assist taxpayers in making their payments via the e-pay tax facility in the e-filing portal of the income tax.

- The bank also received government's approval for collection of Direct Tax last financial year and has been made effective since 1 July 2022.
- With the partnership, Federal Bank became the first one in India to be registered under Tin 2.0 platform of Income Tax Department.
- The TIN 2.0 platform is "Payment Gateway" that went live in July this year.
- It has been enabled, providing one more payment option to taxpayers, who can now make their payments with ease, using modes such as Credit/Debit Card, UPI, NEFT/RTGS and Internet Banking.

3<sup>rd</sup> AUGUST, 2022

## Government of India released postage stamp to mark birth anniversary of Pingali Venkayya

### Key highlights:

- The government of India released a special commemorative postage stamp to mark the 146th birth anniversary of Pingali Venkayya, the designer of India's national flag.
- The stamp was released by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an event "Tiranga Utsav" organised by the Ministry of Culture at Indira Gandhi Stadium, in New Delhi.
- The event also displayed the original design of the national flag made by Pingali Venkayya. The current flag is the modified version of the first design of the flag.
- The Tiranga Utsav also witnessed the grand launch of the "Har Ghar Tiranga" anthem and video.
- Venkayya, born on August 02, 1876, near Machilipatnam town in Andhra Pradesh, was a freedom fighter and a follower of Gandhian principles.

## New START Treaty

- **Context:** Russia is ready for talks with the United States on nuclear arms control even as Moscow and Washington have remained locked in a tense stand-off over Russia's actions in Ukraine.

### Key highlights:

- The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) pact limits the number of deployed nuclear warheads, missiles and bombers and it has been renewed to extend to year 2026.
- The treaty limits the US and Russia to a maximum of 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 700 deployed missiles and bombers, well below Cold War caps.
- It was signed in 2010 by former US President Barack Obama and then-Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. It entered into force on 5th February, 2011.
- It is one of the key controls on the superpower deployment of nuclear weapons

## "Antarctica Bill" introduced in Lok Sabha

- **Context:** The government has introduced the 'Antarctic Bill' in the Lok Sabha, which envisages regulating visits and activities to Antarctica as well potential disputes that may arise among those present on the continent.

### Key highlights:

- The Bill is applicable to Indian citizens as well as foreign citizens.
- In October 2021, India extended its support for protecting the Antarctic environment and for co-sponsoring the proposal of the European Union for designating East Antarctica and the Weddell Sea as marine protected area.
- Earlier, a 100-km long body of ice in Antarctica, which has been experiencing rapid melting, was formally named as Glasgow after the Glasgow climate summit.
- Objective is to provide a harmonious policy framework for India's Antarctic activities through a well-established legal mechanism, facilitate activities of the Indian Antarctic programme, including management of Antarctic tourism and sustainable development of fisheries.

4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2022

## Suresh Patel appointed as Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC)

### Key highlights:

- President Droupadi Murmu administered the oath to Suresh Patel.
- The central vigilance commissioner heads the central vigilance commission.
- Nittoor Srinivasa Rau was the first chief vigilance commissioner of India.
- The central vigilance commissioner is appointed by the President on the recommendation of a committee consisting of the Prime Minister, minister of Home Affairs and leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha.
- Central Vigilance Commission is an apex anti-corruption government body in India. It was established on the recommendation of K Santhanam committee and was granted statutory status in 2003.

## India to host UNSC meet on Counterterrorism

### Key highlights:

- India will host diplomats of the 15-nation UN Security Council in October for a special meeting on counterterrorism.
- India is halfway through the second year of its two-year term as an elected non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.
- India's tenure at the Council will end in December this year when the country will also preside as President of the powerful UN organ for the month.
- India chairs the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee for 2022 and will in October host diplomats of the 15-nation Security Council, including US, China and Russia, for the counter-terrorism committee's special meeting.
- Current members of the Security Council are Albania, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana, India, Ireland, Kenya, Mexico,

Norway and the UAE, along with five permanent members China, France, Russia, the UK and the US.

5<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2022

## ISRO to Launch AzaadiSAT

- **Context:** Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch its smallest commercial rocket to unfurl Tricolour in space.

### Key Highlights

- To mark country's celebrations of 'Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the SSLV will have a co-passenger satellite called 'AzaadiSAT' comprising 75 payloads.
- The launch will take place from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota.
- This project was specially conceptualised for the 75th Independence Day year celebrations to encourage scientific temper and create opportunities for young girls to choose space research as their care.
- The satellite is built by 750 girl students of 75 schools across India.
- The eight-kg satellite has 75 Femto experiments, selfie cameras to click pictures of its own solar panels and long-range communication transponders.
- The mission life of the satellite is six months.
- This is the first of its kind space mission with an all-women concept to promote women in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) as this year's UN theme is 'Women in Space'.
- ISRO has developed the SSLV launch vehicle to put in low earth orbit satellites weighing less than 500 kg.

## Prime Minister launched Shrimad Rajchandra Mission

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of various projects worth more than Rs 300 crore of Shrimad Rajchandra Mission.

## Key Highlights

- PM Narendra Modi inaugurated Shrimad Rajchandra Hospital at Dharampur in Valsad. The cost of the entire project is around Rs 200 crore and will provide world class tertiary medical facilities especially to the people of southern Gujarat.
- The prime minister also laid the foundation stone of Shrimad Rajchandra Animal Hospital.
- PM also laid the foundation stone of Shrimad Rajchandra Center of Excellence for Women. It will employ over 700 tribal women and provide livelihood to thousands others subsequently.

## About Shrimad Rajchandra

- Shrimad Rajchandra (1867 – 1901) was a Jain poet, mystic, philosopher, scholar and reformer.
- He wrote much philosophical poetry including Atma Siddhi.
- He is best known for his teachings on Jainism and his spiritual guidance to Mahatma Gandhi.

## DRDO successfully test-fired Laser Guided Anti-Tank Missile System

- **Context:** DRDO recently, successfully test-fired the indigenously developed Laser Guided Anti-Tank Missile System.

## Key Highlights

- Made-in-India laser-guided Anti-Tank Guided Missiles (ATGM) were successfully test-fired from Main Battle Tank (MBT) Arjun by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Indian Army from the KK Range in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar.
- The missiles hit targets with precision and successfully defeated them from two different ranges. Telemetry systems recorded the flight performance of the missiles.
- The all-indigenous Laser Guided ATGM employs a High Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) warhead to defeat Explosive Reactive Armour (ERA)-protected vehicles.

- The ATGM has been developed with multi-platform launch capability and is currently undergoing technical evaluation trials from a 120 mm rifled gun of MBT Arjun.
- With today's trials, conducted with the support of Armoured Corps Centre & School (ACC&S), Ahmednagar, the consistency of ATGM's capability to engage targets from minimum to maximum range has been established successfully.

6<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 2022

## Cabinet approved India's new "Nationally Determined Contribution"

- **Context:** Union cabinet approved India's updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC).

## Key Highlights

- The cabinet has approved the "Nationally Determined Contribution" of country and soon to be submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- Union cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved India's updated NDC.
- As per this announcement, India will now reduce emissions intensity of its GDP by 45% by 2030 from 2005 levels.
- India will also achieve 50% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources by 2030.
- Updated NDC translates the 'Panchamrit' into enhanced climate targets. India had announced Panchamrit at COP26.
- India is one of the 193 parties signatory to the Paris Agreement, a legally binding international treaty on climate change. Under the Agreement, parties have to keep updating their NDCs (which are commitments made in order to adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change) every five years.
- India's first NDC, submitted to the UNFCCC in October 2015, had eight main goals. These also

included reducing the emissions intensity of its GDP by 33% to 35% by 2030 (from levels in 2005) and creating an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent by increasing forest and tree cover by 2030.

- The updated NDC also highlights the importance of changing lifestyles for the environment in tackling climate change (the 'LiFE', Lifestyle for Environment, movement, as mentioned by PM Narendra Modi during COP26 in Glasgow last year). One target is "to put forward and further propagate a healthy and sustainable way of living based on traditions and values of conservation and moderation, including through a mass movement for 'LiFE'– 'Lifestyle for Environment' as a key to combating climate change".

## Haryana Government launched "Cheerag Scheme"

- **Context:** Haryana government recently launched to offer "free education" to Economically Weaker Section (EWS) students of government schools in "budget" private schools.

### Key Highlights

- Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's government recently launched the "Chief Minister Equal Education Relief, Assistance and Grant (Cheerag)" scheme.
- It was introduced in place of a similar scheme launched by Bhupinder Singh Hooda's government in 2007 under Rule 134 A of the Haryana School Education Rules, 2003.
- Under the Cheerag scheme, government school students whose parents have an annual verified income of less than Rs 1.8 lakh can enroll in private schools from Class II to XII.
- The government will reimburse Rs 700 per student from Classes II to V, Rs 900 per student from Classes VI to VIII, and Rs 1,100 per student from Classes IX to XI.

- Haryana Vidyalaya Adhyapak Sangh, a body of government school teachers, is not impressed with the Cheerag scheme and has already staged protests against it across the state. The union leaders have apprehensions that the scheme may be aimed at encouraging private schools at the cost of government school.

## New Ramsar sites in India

- **Context:** Ten new Ramsar sites have been designated in India.

### Key Highlights

- India adds 10 more wetlands designated as Ramsar sites to make a total 64 sites covering an area of 12,50,361 ha in the country.
- The 10 new sites include: Six (6) sites in Tamil Nadu and One (1) each in Goa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha.
- Designation of these sites would help in conservation and management of wetlands and wise use of their resources.
- India is one of the Contracting Parties to Ramsar Convention, signed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. India signed it on 1st Feb 1982. So far 64 wetlands covering an area of 12,50,361 ha have been designated as Ramsar Sites of International Importance from India, till date.

### The newly recognised sites are:

- Koonthankulam Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu
- Nanda Lake, Goa
- Satkosia gorge, Odisha
- Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve (GoMBR), Tamil Nadu
- Vembannur Wetland Complex, Tamil Nadu
- Vellode Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu
- Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu and
- Udhayamarhandapuram Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu
- Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, Karnataka and
- Sirpur Wetland, Madhya Pradesh

7<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 2022

## “SURE” scheme launched by Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB)

- **Context:** A new scheme called SURE by Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), was launched to create a robust R&D ecosystem in state and private universities and colleges.

### Key Highlights

- State University Research Excellence (SERB-SURE) is a new innovative scheme of the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), a statutory body of the Department of Science and Technology (DST).
- It is a scheme to augment the research capabilities in a structured way to create a robust R&D ecosystem in state universities and colleges by fostering collaboration for high-end research.
- The growth of existing research capabilities at these institutions is imperative to ensure horizontal diffusion of research excellence reaching all research students hoping to contribute to the national R&D ecosystem and promoting the enhancement of quality through SERB support.
- Under the scheme the total research grants not exceeding Rs. 30 lakhs for a period of three years are provided for minor equipment/s, research personnel, consumables, domestic travel, contingency and other costs (analytical charges, equipment user charges, fieldwork charges, etc.) "Overhead" is provided to the implementing institution as per prevailing norms of SERB.

## China launched reusable spacecraft

- **Context:** China recently, successfully launched a pilot reusable spacecraft with its Long March-2F carrier rocket.

### Key Highlights

- China has launched a 'reusable' Long March 2F rocket to low-Earth orbit in what is being labelled as a secret mission".

- The unidentified spacecraft, was launched from China's Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center.
- As per Chinese officials, the spacecraft tests include "technical verification of reusable and on-orbit services as planned to provide technical support for the peaceful use of space".
- It will return to a planned landing site after operating in the orbit for some time to provide technical validations for reuses. The Long March-2F rocket is well-equipped with escape and failure detection systems.
- China said it made a big step towards developing reusable space transportation technology as it launched a spacecraft which returned to Earth on the same day after flying to the edge of the atmosphere in July.

## 106 Years old observatory in Bihar gets UNESCO tag

- **Context:** The 106-year-old astronomical observatory of Langat Singh College, Muzaffarpur, under Bhim Rao Ambedkar Bihar University (BRABU) has been included on the UNESCO list of important endangered heritage observatories of the world.

### Key Highlights

- The observatory, the first of its kind in eastern India, was established in the college in 1916 to impart astronomical knowledge to the students in detail.
- A planetarium was also set up in the college in 1946. After 1970, the condition of the observatory, as well as the planetarium, started declining gradually and most of the machines installed there have either been lost or become junk.
- According to the college records, it was established by efforts of Prof Romesh Chandra Sen. He consulted J Mitchell, an amateur astronomer and principal of Wesleyan College, Bankura in West Bengal, seeking his guidance.
- In 1915, the college acquired a telescope, astronomical clock, chronograph and other equipment from England after which the astronomical observatory started functioning in 1916.