MADE EASY

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

MAY, 2023

Week-4

22-31 May, 2023

★★ *Useful for* ★★

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

22nd MAY, 2023

FIPIC Summit 2023

- **Context:** The Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit was recently organized in Papua New Guinea.

Key highlights

- FIPIC Summit served as a significant platform for fostering cooperation in various areas such as trade, investment, climate change, and sustainable development.
- One of the key highlights of this year's FIPIC Summit was the full participation of leaders from all 14 countries.
- The FIPIC Summit provided a unique opportunity for collaboration and dialogue between India and the Pacific Islands nations.
- It aimed to enhance mutual understanding, cooperation, and development in various sectors.

About FIPIC

FIPIC is a multinational grouping, established in 2014, which aims to promote collaboration between India and 14 Pacific Islands nations, including Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

PM Modi receives Highest Honours from Fiji and Papua New Guinea

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently received the highest honors from Fiji and Papua New Guinea.
- He received Companion of the Order of Fiji from Sitiveni Rabuka, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Fiji. The award recognizes Prime Minister Modi's outstanding contributions and strong bilateral relations between India and Fiji.
- PM Modi also received Companion of the Order of Logohu, the highest honour awarded by Papua New Guinea. The award recognizes PM Modi's efforts in promoting unity among Pacific Island countries and his role in spearheading the cause of the Global South.

Rayyanah Barnawi

- **Context:** Rayyanah Barnawi became the first Arab woman to venture into space.

Key highlights

- Barnawi, along with her co-astronaut Ali al-Qarni, embarked on their journey aboard the SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.
- The primary purpose of the mission to the International Space Station (ISS) was to conduct a series of experiments. The team focused on human research, cell sciences, and cloud seeding experiments in the unique microgravity environment of the space station.
- The mission held great importance for Saudi Arabia as it strove to expand its space science education and reduce its reliance on oil, in alignment with the Vision 2030 reform program.
- This program aimed to create new opportunities and jobs for young Saudis while driving economic diversification.

23rd MAY, 2023

Maharana Pratap Lok

- **Context:** Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan recently announced the construction of Veer Shiromani Maharana Pratap Lok in Bhopal.

Key highlights

- The upcoming Veer Shiromani Maharana Pratap Lok in Bhopal will serve as a testament to Maharana Pratap's legacy.
- This memorial aims to depict the various aspects of his life, including his sacrifice, penance, struggle, and gallantry.
- By capturing the essence of his remarkable journey, future generations will be able to appreciate and learn from his endeavors to protect the culture and freedom of his people.

- To ensure that Maharana Pratap's bravery and valor are not forgotten, the state's school curriculum will also incorporate his inspiring stories.
- Recognizing the significance of Maharana Pratap's contributions, the Madhya Pradesh government also plans to establish the Maharana Pratap Welfare Board. This board will work towards preserving and promoting the values Maharana Pratap stood for, ensuring his legacy remains alive in the hearts and minds of the people.

ONDC Academy

- **Context:** The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) is set to make a significant stride in raising awareness and enhancing its ecosystem by launching ONDC Academy.

Key highlights

- The primary objective of the ONDC Academy is to foster a stronger and more efficient ecosystem for digital commerce.
- It seeks to equip network participants with in-depth knowledge and understanding of various processes, rules, regulations, and best practices.
- By nurturing a skilled and certified community, the academy aims to elevate the standards of the ONDC Network and provide a seamless experience for all stakeholders involved.
- To ensure the quality and competence of network participants, the ONDC Academy will utilize the certification platform provided by the National Stock Exchange.

About ONDC Network

- Unlike traditional online commerce platforms, the ONDC Network operates without a centralized platform. This unique approach creates distinct legal relationships between participants, buyers, and sellers.
- Network participants, including buyer and seller apps, must align with specific processes and systems governing ONDC, such as payments, commercial relationships, settlements, and grievance redressal, among others.
- Currently, more than 35,000 retail merchants are ONDC-enabled, offering a wide range of products through the network.

24th MAY, 2023

International Booker Prize, 2023

- **Context:** Georgi Gospodinov, a prominent Bulgarian writer, became the first Bulgarian to receive the International Booker Prize.

Key facts

- He shares the prize with skilled translator Angela Rodel for his novel 'Time Shelter'.
- Georgi Gospodinov, a prominent Bulgarian writer, has gained international acclaim for his thought-provoking works that highlights the complexities of human existence.
- His literary achievements have transcended language barriers, with his books being translated into several languages.

Sengol

- **Context:** Recently, during the inauguration of the new Parliament building, Prime Minister Narendra Modi installed a sceptre, called the 'Sengol', in Lok Sabha.

Key facts

- The 'Sengol' sceptre carries significant historical significance as it was gifted to Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, representing the handover of authority from the British colonial rule.

- Derived from the Tamil word 'semmai,' which means excellence, the 'Sengol' represents the embodiment of power and authority.

- The idea of using the 'Sengol' sceptre for the symbolic transfer of power emerged when Lord Mountbatten, the then Viceroy of British India, inquired about a suitable symbol. Seeking advice from C Rajagopalachari, the last Governor-General of India, who suggested the use of the 'Sengol' sceptre.

- It was inspired by a similar ceremony in the Chola dynasty, where power was transferred between kings.

25th MAY, 2023

UDAN 5.1

- **Context:** The Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik) 5.1, a scheme aimed at improving last-mile connectivity to remote areas of the country through helicopters.

Key highlights

- UDAN 5.1 marks a significant development as it is the first round of UDAN specifically designed for helicopter routes.

- The scheme aims to bring air connectivity to remote areas where traditional airports are not feasible.

- By utilizing helicopters, it becomes possible to reach even the most inaccessible regions, promoting inclusive development.

- To make flying in helicopters more affordable, the airfare caps have been reduced by 25%. This reduction enables passengers to experience the convenience and speed of air travel at a more affordable cost.

Jharkhand High Court

- **Context:** The President of India Droupadi Murmu recently inaugurated new building of Jharkhand High Court.

Key highlights

- It is the largest high court complex in the country.

- The high court's new building was conceptualized in 2013, aiming to address the increasing number of litigants and replace the old high court building, which has been in operation since 1972.

- The main building complex spans 72 acres, while the entire campus covers 167 acres, allowing room for future expansion.

- The high court complex boasts an impressive range of facilities, including an auditorium, conference rooms, committee meeting halls, and a separate building for the advocate general and government counsels

- To ensure the safety and security of all occupants, the new high court building incorporates advanced security measures. A total of 500 CCTV cameras have been installed throughout the premises, enabling comprehensive surveillance and monitoring.

26th MAY, 2023

AIRAWAT

- **Context:** India's AI supercomputer 'AIRAWAT' secured the 75th position in the prestigious Top 500 Global Supercomputing List.

Key highlights

- The ranking was announced during the 61st edition of the International Supercomputing Conference (ISC 2023) held in Germany.

- This AI supercomputer can process massive amounts of data and perform complex calculations.

- Its computational capabilities far exceed that of modern laptops or desktops, as it can perform quadrillions of calculations per second, a staggering feat compared to the 3 billion calculations per second of a typical personal computer.

- The AI Research Analytics and Knowledge Dissemination Platform (AIRAWAT) integrated with

PARAM Siddhi showcase the impressive capabilities. Together, they offer a total peak compute capacity of 13 Petaflops in double precision.

ITF Transport Outlook 2023

- **Context:** The International Transport Forum (ITF) recently released its highly anticipated ITF Transport Outlook 2023 report, highlighting the importance of adopting a mix of policies to promote sustainable choices in transportation.

Key highlights

- The ITF Transport Outlook 2023 report emphasizes the need for a comprehensive range of policies to encourage sustainable transportation choices.
- It includes investing in public transport infrastructure, supporting the transition to transport modes with higher occupancy or load factors, and promoting the development of more compact cities.
- Governments worldwide have a significant opportunity to save an estimated $4 trillion in road maintenance and investment by actively pursuing decarbonization strategies.
- It suggests that the transport sector has the potential to reduce its CO2 emissions by approximately 80% over the next 25 years, compared to 2019 levels.

XPoSat

- **Context:** The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Raman Research Institute (RRI), Bengaluru, have joined hands to embark on an exciting mission known as the X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat).

Key highlights

- This project aims to venture into the dynamics of bright astronomical X-ray sources, shedding light on their behavior and characteristics.
- The collaboration between ISRO and RRI is focused on the construction of the X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat).

- This satellite is scheduled to be launched later this year, and its mission is to study the various dynamics of bright astronomical X-ray sources present in extreme conditions.
- While XPoSat marks India's first venture into polarimetry missions, the NASA launched the world's second polarimetry mission called the Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer (IXPE) in 2021.

27th MAY, 2023

Daam Malware

- **Context:** The Central Government recently issued an advisory warning individual about a dangerous malware known as 'Daam' that specifically targets Android phones.

Key highlights

- It highlights the severity of the threat and provides crucial information on how to safeguard personal data and devices from potential attacks.
- Daam is a malicious software that possesses the capability to infiltrate Android devices and gain unauthorized access to various sensitive components, including call records, contacts, history, and even the device's camera.
- The Daam malware primarily spreads through third-party websites or applications obtained from untrusted or unknown sources.
- Daam can modify device passwords, leaving users vulnerable to unauthorized access and control.
- In light of this advisory, several precautions are recommended to protect oneself against the Daam malware like avoid visiting untrusted websites and refraining from clicking on unverified links.

Cheetah Project Steering Committee

- **Context:** In a significant conservation effort, the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has set up the Cheetah Project Steering Committee.

Key highlights

- The NTCA holds the responsibility of overseeing Project Cheetah. As the primary governing body, it plays a vital role in coordinating and managing the reintroduction efforts.
- NTCA has constituted the Project Steering Committee to guide and monitor the progress of Project Cheetah.
- Famous wildlife conservationist Rajesh Gopal has been appointed as the chairperson of the committee.
- The Committee will play a pivotal role in Project Cheetah, reviewing and monitoring the program's progress.
- The establishment of the Project Steering Committee marks a transition from the previous Cheetah Task Force, which monitored the cheetah reintroduction program.

28th MAY 2023

New Parliament Building

- **Context:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 28th May inaugurated India's new Parliament building.

Key features

- New Parliament Building is adorned with intricate statues and motifs inspired by ancient sculptures, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the country.
- At the six doors of the new Parliament building, statues inspired by ancient sculptures take center stage.
  - **Gaj Dwar:** The Gaj Dwar, one of the entrances, features imposing stone elephants that pay homage to the statues at the 9th-century Madhukeshwara temple in Banavasi, Karnataka.
  - **Ashwa Dwar:** Adorning the Ashwa Dwar entrance are statues of horses, reminiscent of the sculptures at the Sun temple in Odisha from the 13th century.
  - The **Shardula**, **Hamsa**, and **Makara dwars** showcase statues inspired by renowned sculptures from different regions of India.

- **Garuda Dwar:** The Garuda Dwar, the final entrance, features statues of the mount (vahana) of Vishnu. The Garuda dwar exudes a sense of reverence and spirituality.
- The interior design of the Rajya Sabha, the upper house, takes inspiration from India's national flower, the lotus. On the other hand, the interior of the Lok Sabha, the lower house, draws inspiration from the peacock, India's national bird.
- The new Parliament building boasts three ceremonial foyers that showcase impressive brass images. These magnificent pieces depict iconic figures such as Mahatma Gandhi, Chanakya, Gargi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, B.R. Ambedkar, and the Chariot Wheel from the Sun Temple at Konark. They serve as a testament to the rich cultural heritage and the contributions of these esteemed individuals to the nation.

Rs. 75 Commemorative Coin

- **Context:** The Finance Ministry recently announced the launch of a new commemorative coin, celebrating important events and personalities in the country's heritage.

Key highlights

- The newly introduced Rs 75 commemorative coin is composed of a unique quaternary alloy. It consists of 50% silver, 40% copper, 5% nickel, and 5% zinc.
- The face of the coin is adorned with the renowned Lion Capitol of Ashoka Pillar at its center. Below the emblem, the inscription "सत्यमेव जयते" (Satyameva Jayate) is elegantly engraved.
- On the left periphery, the word "भारत" (Bharat) is inscribed in Devnagri script, while the word "INDIA" appears on the right periphery in English.
- Flipping the coin reveals a captivating image of the new parliament building, showcasing the nation's democratic spirit. The upper periphery carries the inscription "Sansad Sankul" in Devanagari script, while the lower periphery proudly displays the words "Parliament Complex" in English.

■ DO YOU KNOW: _____

Under the authority granted by the Coinage Act, 2011, the Central Government holds the power to design and mint coins across various denominations. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) plays a crucial role in the distribution of these coins, ensuring they reach the public as intended by the Central Government.

29th MAY 2023

Recep Tayyip Erdogan

- **Context:** Recep Tayyip Erdogan recently emerged as the winner in Turkey's runoff election, securing his rule until 2028.

Key highlights

- Erdogan faced strong opposition from Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who posed as the main challenger in the election.
- Kilicdaroglu's campaign aimed to save Turkey from what he saw as a potential autocracy under Erdogan's leadership. He emphasized the need for immediate measures such as expelling migrants and combating terrorism.
- During the election campaign, Erdogan skillfully appealed to nationalist sentiment, which resonated with many of his supporters.
- Erdogan's victory in the runoff election has solidified his position as Turkey's longest-serving leader. The result is seen as consequential in shaping the country's future.

Praveen Kumar Srivastava

- **Context:** Praveen Kumar Srivastava has recently assumed the position of Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC).

Key highlights

- Prior to assuming the role of Central Vigilance Commissioner, Praveen Kumar Srivastava served as the acting CVC following the completion of Suresh N. Patel's tenure.
- Praveen Kumar Srivastava belongs to the distinguished Assam-Meghalaya cadre of the Indian Administrative Service.
- His background and extensive experience have equipped him with the necessary skills and insights to tackle multifaceted challenges in public administration.

30th MAY, 2023

Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Yojana

- **Context:** The Maharashtra government has recently launched a new financial scheme Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Yojana, aimed at providing support to farmers in the state.

Key highlights

- Under the Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Yojana, farmers in Maharashtra will receive an annual payment of Rs 6,000. This financial aid is in addition to the amount of Rs 6,000 that farmers already receive in instalments per year from the Centre's Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana.
- More than one crore farmers in Maharashtra are expected to benefit from the state government's Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Yojana.
- With the launch of the Namo Shetkari Mahasanman Yojana, the Maharashtra government aims to alleviate financial burdens faced by farmers and promote their economic well-being.

'Mo Ghara' (My House) Scheme

- **Context:** The Odisha government has recently announced a new housing scheme called "Mo Ghara" or "My Home."

Key highlights

- This initiative aims to transform kutcha houses into pucca ones.

- Under this scheme, eligible beneficiaries can avail a housing loan of up to Rs 3 lakh. The repayment period for the loan is set at 10 years, providing flexibility and ease of repayment for the beneficiaries.

- The implementation of the Mo Ghara scheme will require a financial implication of approximately Rs 2,150 crore over a two-year period.

- In order to be eligible for the Mo Ghara scheme, families must either reside in kutcha houses or possess at least one pucca room with a solid concrete roof.

- The families with four-wheelers, members in government service, or possessing irrigated land of five acres or more are ineligible for the loan.

Israel-1

- **Context:** Nvidia, the renowned US gaming and computer graphics company, is launching world's most powerful AI supercomputer named 'Israel-1'

Key highlights

- The deployment of Israel-1 represents a major milestone in the field of artificial intelligence.

- This state-of-the-art machine will leverage Nvidia's Spectrum-X networking platform, a purpose-built high-performance ethernet architecture tailored specifically for generative AI workloads.

- Israel-1 is set to achieve a remarkable performance of eight exaflops, enabling it to execute an astounding one quintillion calculations per second.

- Its immense computational power extends beyond AI applications, with an expected peak performance of over 130 petaflops for traditional scientific computing workloads. To accomplish these feats, Israel-1 will be equipped with cutting-edge data processing units known as BlueField-3, developed in Israel.

- This seamless integration of AI technologies enhances operational efficiency and paves the way for transformative advancements across industries.

31ᵗʰ MAY, 2023

Delhi's Old Fort

- **Context:** Recently, there were significant archaeological findings at Delhi's Old Fort that shed light on the city's ancient history.

Key highlights

- The recent excavations at Old Fort have unearthed several noteworthy historical artifacts. Among them are shards of Painted Gray Ware pottery, which are typically dated to the period between 1200 BC and 600 BC.

- These pottery pieces offer a glimpse into the artistic traditions of the pre-Mauryan era.

- The ongoing excavation at Old Fort aims to establish a complete chronology of the site by uncovering multiple cultural levels representing different historical periods.

- So far, nine cultural levels have been identified, including pre-Mauryan, Mauryan, Sunga, Kushana, Gupta, post-Gupta, Rajput, Sultanate, and Mughal periods.

- This comprehensive exploration promises to provide a more nuanced understanding of the ancient city of Indraprastha.

About Old Fort

- Old Fort holds immense significance in Indian mythology, with many believing it to be the legendary city of Indraprastha mentioned in the Mahabharat.

- The present fort was originally constructed by Sher Shah Suri and later renovated by Mughal emperor Humayun.

Solar City Project

- **Context:** The Kerala government has initiated a groundbreaking project aimed at transforming every rooftop in Thiruvananthapuram into a solar energy-producing station.

Key highlights

- This ambitious project is led by the Agency for New and Renewable Energy Research and Technology (Anert) which seeks to position the Thiruvananthapuram as one of the largest 'solar cities' in the country.

- Anert has identified a staggering three lakh buildings suitable for the installation of solar panels, creating a solar atlas to facilitate the process.

- By tapping into this vast network, Thiruvananthapuram has the potential to generate a remarkable 800 MW of solar energy.

- The Central government plays a crucial role in supporting this project by offering a substantial subsidy of 40% for 3-KW solar systems. With this subsidy, the cost of installing a 3-KW solar system can be reduced to approximately Rs 1.6 lakh.

- The Kerala government has also stepped in to incentivize the renewable energy option by offering up to 4% interest on bank loans for solar system purchases.