



CURRENT AFFAIRS 16th February 2023

National News

1. David Malpass to step down from post World Bank chief



- World Bank chief David Malpass yesterday announced that he would step down from the post before his five-year term expires.
- Mr. Malpass was appointed to the role in 2019 and previously served as Under Secretary of the Treasury for international affairs in US Administration.
- According to media reports, in recent months, Malpass has come up against calls for his resignation or removal.
- Climate activists had called for Malpass to be ousted for what they said was an inadequate approach to the climate crisis.
- Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, in a statement, said that the US is looking forward to a swift nomination process for Malpass' successor.

2. PM virtually inaugurates Jal Jan Abhiyan in Rajasthan



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi stressed that the Jal-Jan Abhiyan is being launched at a time when water scarcity is being seen as a future crisis all over the world.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the Jal Jan Abhiyan in Abu Road in Sirohi district of Rajasthan on Thursday.
- He noted that the 21st-century world is realising the seriousness of limited water resources on earth and pointed out that water security is a huge question for India due to its large population.
- He said , “in the Amrit Kaal, India is looking towards water as the future.
- There will be a tomorrow if there is water”, the Prime Minister remarked and underlined that joint efforts have to be made beginning today.
- Shri Modi expressed satisfaction that the country has turned water conservation into a mass movement and said, the Jal-Jan Abhiyan of Brahma Kumaris will give new strength to this effort of public participation.

- He noted that the reach of water conservation campaigns will also get a boost thereby boosting its effect.
- The Prime Minister highlighted the sages of India who had created a restrained, balanced and sensitive system regarding nature, the environment and water thousands of years ago.

3. Second batch of 12 cheetahs from South Africa to reach India on 18 Feb



- The second batch of 12 cheetahs from South Africa will reach India on the 18th of this month.
- Talking to media in New Delhi today, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Bhupender Yadav informed that ten quarantine enclosures were created at Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh for the new batch of cheetahs.
- He lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts in converting environmental crises into harmony, and said it should be an example for the world.
- Earlier, the Prime Minister had released eight cheetahs at Kuno National Park last year.

4. Rolls-Royce announces order of Trent XWB-97 engines from Air India



- Rolls-Royce, a British engineering company, announced that it has received an order from Air India for 68 Trent XWB-97 engines, in addition to an option for 20 more.
- The large A350 aircraft of Airbus are powered by Rolls-Royce XWB engines.
- Air India sealed an order for procuring 250 Airbus passenger jets.
- The order comprises 40 Airbus A350s and 210 Airbus A320/a321 aircraft. Separately, Air India ordered 220 planes from Boeing.
- This is the biggest-ever order for the Trent XWB-97, which exclusively powers the Airbus A350-1000. Air India has also ordered 12 Trent XWB-84, engines, the sole engine option for the Airbus A350-900.
- It also informed that this is the first time that an Indian airline has ordered the Trent XWB and the deal will make Air India the largest operator of the Trent XWB-97 in the world.

- Rolls-Royce Tufan Erginbilgic noted that the announcement marks an “exciting and truly remarkable” occasion for Tata Group and Air India.
- Air India is the first Indian airline to order the Trent XWB and the size of the commitment, including options, will make them the biggest operator of the Trent XWB-97 in the world.

5. India, US Forces Run Joint Exercise Tarkash To Counter Chemical Terror Threats



- A joint counter-terrorism exercise Tarkash between National Security Guard (NSG) and US Special Operations Forces (SOF) culminated in Chennai, after four weeks of intense training and joint anti-terror exercises.
- The main highlight of the exercise was mock drills for the CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) counter terror response by special forces of both countries.
- The training regimen of the exercise included the conduct of urban counter-terrorism drills, combat shooting and practice of long-range marksmanship, to enhance mutual warfare capabilities.
- In the current geopolitical landscape, Exercise Tarkash is a significant one as India is surrounded by two nuclear-armed neighbors, China and Pakistan.
- The main aim of this exercise is to train commandos of both the special forces units for the implementation of rapid neutralisation of enemies, the rescuing of hostages and neutralise the threat of chemical weapons.

- Notably, this was the first instance in the exercise's history where Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Terror response (CBRN) drills were conducted.
- CBRN weapons are classified as weapons of mass destruction and have been used by states and terror elements in the past.

6. Defence Minister launches 'iDEX Investor Hub', Rs 200 cr already pledged



- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh launched the 'iDEX Investor Hub' (iIH), under which more than Rs 200 crores had already been pledged by leading Indian investors.
- Defence Minister also launched the ninth edition of 'Defence India Startup Challenges (DISC 9)' on "Cybersecurity" during the annual defense innovation event 'Manthan' as part of the Aero India 2023.
- Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) is the flagship initiative of the Department of Defence Production to encourage start-ups and other such entities engaged in defense innovation.
- The iDEX Investor Hub' aims to accelerate investment in the Defence sector and give investors a unified view of opportunities and innovations.
- DISC 9 launched the first collaboration of iDEX with the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (i4C) division of the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- These challenges have been curated from Services, DPSUs, and the Ministry of Home Affairs, revealing the

deep impact and interest iDEX has generated in the Defence industry.

- DIO has also signed MoUs with ISRO, IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre), and ISpA (Indian Space Association) to further strengthen the Defence Space.
- Another MoU was signed with the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) to potentially launch start-up challenges in the future.
- The fourth edition of the Innovate 4 Defence internship (i4D) was also launched, inviting applications from students from all over India, during the event.

7. Union Minister Inaugurates IFFCO Nano Urea Liquid Plants at Aonla and Phulpur



- Union Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya inaugurated the IFFCO Nano Urea Liquid Plants at Aonla and Phulpur in Uttar Pradesh.
- Dr. Mandaviya stated that it is an important day because Nano urea plants have been dedicated to the nation.
- He informed that Nano Urea, in the coming times will ensure the progress of the farmers and increase their income.
- The Union Minister highlighted the benefits of Nano urea stating that it is the best green technology and provides solutions to pollution. It saves the soil and also increases productivity and hence is the best for the farmers.

- **The government's Expert Committee has approved Nano DAP and it will also come to replace DAP soon. He added that Nano-DAP will immensely benefit our farmers and it will be available at half the cost of DAP.**
- **Dr. Mandaviya also underlined the efforts of the government in making Nano urea available to the farmers.**
- **He also pointed out the challenges in bringing Nano urea ranging from getting approvals from various departments and convincing the farmers to tackle the conventional urea lobby.**
- **Dr. Mandaviya also informed that it is an alternate fertilizer. The farmers for years used urea and DAP to increase productivity. When urea is used, only 35% Nitrogen (Urea) gets used by the crop and the unused affects the soil.**
- **The Union Minister appreciated the efforts of Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has always worked towards increasing farmer income and their prosperity.**
- **He also insisted on natural farming, Biofertilizers, and alternate fertilizers.**