



CURRENT AFFAIRS 18th April 2023

National News

1. DRDO Industry Academia Centre of Excellence inaugurated at IIT Hyderabad.



- The inauguration of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Industry Academia Centre of Excellence (DIA-CoE) took place at the Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad, making it the largest facility of its kind in the country.
- DRDO Chairman, Dr Samir V Kamat, inaugurated the facility at the IIT-Hyderabad campus in Telangana, and stated that the centre will take on futuristic projects for long-term research needed by DRDO.
- He also highlighted that the DIA-CoE IITH is the largest among all 15 CoEs in the country, and the DRDO team will collaborate with IIT-H to identify target projects in each domain and execute them within a period of 3-5 years.
- Three years ago, DRDO and IITH started a research cell that has now been converted into a Centre of Excellence. This CoE will focus on seven technology projects and will operate at DIA-CoE located at IITH.

- **Professor B S Murty, the director of IITH, stated that the establishment of this center is a significant move towards achieving self-reliance in the defense sector, which is a crucial aspect of Atmabibhar Bharat.**

2. IIT-I collaborates with NASA to develop low cost camera setu.



- **IIT Indore, in partnership with NASA-Caltech and the University of Gothenburg in Sweden, has designed an inexpensive camera setup that can capture multispectral images of four chemical species in a flame using a single DSLR camera.**
- **Previously, capturing such images required a complicated system with four cameras, but this new setup can simultaneously capture multiple spectral three-dimensional images of four chemical species in a flame using only one DSLR camera.**
- **After almost three years of research, a team of five researchers collaborated with the University of Gothenburg in Sweden and NASA-Caltech in the USA to create the 'CL-Flam', a low-cost DSLR camera device.**
- **The device was developed at a cost of approximately Rs 50,000.**
- **Deshmukh has explained that through the analysis of images obtained by the device, it is possible to study the elements that are released during the combustion of fuel in industrial burners and engines.**

- This includes engines in various vehicles ranging from ordinary automobiles to airplanes and spacecraft.
- By studying these elements, improvements can be made in engines and burners to ensure optimal and eco-friendly use of fuels during combustion.
- As a result, the efficiency of engines and burners can be increased, which would lead to a decrease in the consumption of petroleum fuels and a reduction in the emission of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide.

3. India opens its 16th Visa application center in Kushtia.



- The 16th Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) in Bangladesh was inaugurated by High Commissioner Pranya Verma in Kushtia town.
- The opening ceremony was attended by Mahbubul Alam Hanif, a Member of Parliament from Kushtia-3.
- The IVAC is expected to provide more convenience and accessibility to the residents of Kushtia and nearby areas who need to apply for visas to travel to India.
- According to a press release by the High Commission of India in Bangladesh, the newly inaugurated IVAC center is expected to enhance tourism, trade, and people-to-people exchanges between India and Bangladesh.
- The center is aimed at promoting a peaceful and prosperous region where individuals can travel, work together, and exchange ideas with ease and convenience.
- The Indian High Commission in Bangladesh operates the biggest visa operation centre in the world.
- A large number of foreign visitors to India, including those applying for medical, tourist, business, and student visas,

come from Bangladesh. In the fiscal year 2019-20, more than 1.6 million visas were issued in Dhaka.

4. Syria becomes world's largest 'narco-state': Report.



- According to reports, Syria has now become the world's largest narco-state, with the majority of its foreign currency earnings coming from the production and export of Captagon, a highly addictive amphetamine commonly referred to as "poor man's coke".
- In line with the definition provided by Collins Dictionary, Syria can be classified as a narco-state as the illegal trade of narcotics, specifically Captagon, forms a significant portion of its economy, accounting for over 90 percent of the country's foreign currency earnings
- The rapid growth in the production and use of illicit drugs, particularly Captagon, has raised concerns globally.
- In response, the US enacted the Captagon Act last year, which links the trade of the drug to the Assad regime in Syria and labels it a "transnational security threat."
- Captagon is a popular recreational drug among the youth in Gulf states, as well as being used by armed individuals who feel invincible while under its influence
- It is sometimes referred to as "Captain Courage" or "Jihadi magic potion"

- Additionally, Captagon is used by dieters, students studying for exams, and people who work double shifts, at night, or have multiple jobs to make ends meet
- The cost of manufacturing Captagon is as low as USD 1 per pill
- However, the need to pay bribes to smugglers, soldiers, secret police, warlords, and customs officials to pass various routes and checkpoints increases the price of the drug
- The price can go up to USD 14-20 per pill due to these additional costs

5. Arunachal Pradesh CM inaugurates Shar Nyima Tsho Sum Namyig Lhakhang.



- The Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Pema Khandu, inaugurated the newly renovated Shar Nyima Tsho Sum Namyig Lhakhang (Gonpa) at Gyangkhar, his native village in Tawang district.
- The Gonpa has great historical significance for the well-being of humans, particularly for the people of Shar Nyima Tsho Sum and all Buddhists in general.
- The 11-12th century Gonpa was on the verge of collapse, but it has now been renovated, and all the necessary rituals and blessings have been performed to restore it to its former glory.
- During a special public function for Buddhist followers held at Gyangkhar village after the inauguration, the Chief Minister felicitated top-ranked monks and dignitaries.
- The sacred site has been refurbished with a new structure and all the necessary items, and religious rituals and

blessings have been performed for the benefit and improvement of all living beings.

- The temple has a significant historical and spiritual importance for the people of Shar Nyima Tsho Sum and all Buddhists in general.
- The temple was built in the 11th-12th century and was recently renovated and restored to its present form.

6. CBIC likely to introduce new system of publishing daily currency exchange rates



- The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) is reportedly set to replace the existing fortnightly notification system for currency exchange rates with a daily publishing system on the integrated customs portal.
- The move is expected to capture daily fluctuations in exchange rates, enabling importers and exporters to calculate customs duties with greater precision.
- The current system requires the CBIC to manually notify exchange rates of 22 currencies every fortnight, based on rates from the State Bank of India.
- The exchange rate data will now be automatically forwarded by SBI to ICEGATE, adjusted to the nearest five paise, and integrated with the Indian Customs EDI System before being published on the ICEGATE portal by 6:00 pm each day.
- This new daily publishing system is expected to provide greater accuracy, time efficiency, and a contingency plan in case of technical snags.

7. UAE India's second largest export destination and third largest source of imports.



- According to recent figures released by the Indian Ministry of Commerce, the UAE remains the second most significant export destination for India.
- The US and UAE held onto their first and second positions, respectively, during the financial year 2022-23.
- The ministry's figures, released two weeks into the new fiscal year, indicate a six percent increase in India's overall exports of goods and services during the financial year that concluded last month.
- The US and the UAE retained their first and second positions as India's top export destinations
- India's total exports of goods and services grew by six percent during this period
- The Netherlands replaced China to secure the third spot in India's overall export ranking due to higher imports of refined petroleum products via the maritime nation
- Among the GCC countries, only Saudi Arabia made it to the list of India's top export destinations and import sources, ranking eighth and fifth, respectively