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WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS



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National News

World Radio Day being celebrated across the globe today



- World Radio Day is being celebrated across the globe today. The day is observed every year to raise awareness among the public and the media about the importance of radio and to encourage access to information through radio.
- The theme for the 12th edition of World Radio Day is 'Radio and Peace'. On this occasion, a two-day Radio Festival with the theme : 'Radio for Peace and Radio for Climate Action', is being celebrated in New Delhi.
- The festival, founded by a community broadcaster Archana Kapoor, is celebrated every year.
- With India assuming presidency at the G20, the 6th edition of the Radio Festival- The Wave Forward - is deliberating on the action points and agenda of G20.
- The event is being hosted in collaboration with the G20 Secretariat and supported by the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, Prasar Bharati, UNESCO, and UNICEF.
- Addressing the gathering during the event, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Neerja Sekhar said Radio has smoothly aligned with the advent of modern technology and embraced changes to move forward.
- She said, community radio is playing a crucial role in disseminating important information in coastal, border and left wing extremism and disaster-affected areas and aspirational districts.

Bangladesh govt announces names of 19 individuals, 2 institutions for 'Ekushey Padak'



- The government of Bangladesh has announced the names of 19 individuals and two institutions for the award of 'Ekushey Padak', the second-highest civilian award of the country.
- The names were announced by the Culture Ministry on Sunday. The Ekushey Padak is awarded under various categories such as the contribution to the language movement, Liberation War, art and culture, journalism and social service among others.

- The award will be conferred on three persons under the language movement category, one in liberation war, eight in the art and culture, two in politics among others.
- Bidyanondo Foundation has been selected for Ekushey Award 2023 in the social service category.
- The foundation has been working among the underprivileged and marginalized sections of society for several years.
- Bangladesh National Museum is the second institution chosen for the award.
- Khaleda Manzoor-e Khuda, Liberation War fighter AKM Shamsul Haque (posthumously) and Haji Mohammad Majibor Rahman will get the award in the Language Movement category.

PM Narendra Modi inaugurates biennial airshow and aerospace exhibition Aero India 2023 in Bengaluru



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi says the government's target is to take defense exports to 5 billion dollars by 2024-25.
- He said India will soon be the world's largest defense manufacturing base.
- Addressing the inaugural function of Aero India 2023 in Karnataka's Bengaluru, Mr Modi said the nation is touching new heights today and Aero India 2023 is a prime example of this.
- He said the theme of Aero India - The Runway to a Billion Opportunities - reflects the rise of the country in different spheres.
- Mr Modi said Aero India reflects New India and the clear Bengaluru sky is witnessing this emergence of a New India.
- Mr. Modi appealed to the youth of Karnataka to make the country strong in the defense sector.

Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurates AMRPTEX 2023

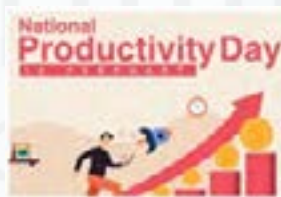


- Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated AMRPTEX 2023 – National Philatelic Ex-

hibition in New Delhi on Saturday.

- This five-day Mahakumbh of Stamps at Pragati Maidan is being organized as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav Celebrations.
- Addressing the gathering on the occasion, Mr Vaishnav said that under the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Postal department has transformed totally.
- He said it has become a digital network for banking, service delivery and social security payments network.
- He also emphasized upon the emerging role of stamps and philately in educating the young minds about India's rich culture, heritage and history.
- He stressed on the need to digitize this old hobby and make it more interesting and engaging for youngsters.

National Productivity Day 2023



- The annual celebration of National Productivity Day is observed on February 12, coordinated by the National Productivity Council (NPC).
- The NPC's mission is to promote awareness towards increasing the productivity of the country.
- The day is celebrated as part of National Productivity Week, which is observed from February 12 to 18.
- This year's National Productivity Day theme is "Productivity, Green Growth, and Sustainability: Celebrating India's G20 Presidency."
- The theme highlights the fact that everybody should give themselves a chance to set productivity goals and work towards them.
- The celebrations are important to raise awareness of productivity, efficiency, and innovation.
- National Productivity Day draws attention to the power of productivity in improving the overall quality of life and it serves as an opportunity for citizens to start building good habits that will help increase productivity.

Path shown by Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati instils hope in crores of people



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated the 200th birth Anniversary of Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati, who founded the Arya Samaj in 1875.
- According to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the nation is making development thanks to nondiscriminatory efforts and policies.
- The first yagya for the nation, he claimed, is being performed today in service of the poor, uneducated, and oppressed.
- In this regard, Mr. Modi emphasized housing, healthcare, and women's empowerment.
- The Prime Minister made this statement in Delhi at the start of a year-long celebration honouring Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati's 200th birthday.
- He claimed that throughout Amrit Kaal, the country adopted the same priorities as Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati. According to the prime minister, helping the poor and marginalised has taken precedence.
- He brought up the fact that the nation's daughters are currently flying Rafale fighter jets in relation to the empowerment of women.
- As taught by Maharishi Dayanand, Mr. Modi's New Education Policy encourages contemporary education while placing a strong focus on Indianness.

Paytm launches G20-theme QR Code to celebrates India's presidency



- In honor of India's G20 presidency and the nation's prominence in mobile payments, One97 Communications Limited, the owner of the top payments and financial services startup Paytm, unveiled a special G20-themed QR Code.
- Ashwini Vaishnaw, the Union Minister for Railways and IT, introduced the QR code at the India Habitat Center's "Digital Payment Utsav."

- Paytm was a key player in the development of mobile payments in India and is regarded as the inventor of QR code payments.
- The “DigiDhan Mission” logo from MeitY, the G20 2023 logo, and the 75th anniversary of India’s independence are all included in the special commemorative QR code.
- Paytm is hosting a special event called “Digital Payments Utsav” in which a branded automobile will tour different parts of Delhi with active audience engagement.
- To raise public knowledge and usage of digital payments, the corporation announced that it will air educational videos on the subject.

Annual meeting of river cities alliance to be held in Pune



- DHARA, Driving Holistic Action for Urban Rivers, the annual meeting of the members of the River Cities Alliance (RCA) is organized by the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMGC), partnered with the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) from 13th to 14th February 2023 in Pune.
- The Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat will address the inaugural event while the Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs, Kaushal Kishore will deliver the valedictory address on day two.
- The DHARA event has strong synergies with the Urban20 initiative under the ambit of India’s G20 Presidency.
- DHARA 2023 will witness multiple sessions over the two-day event that include sessions on ‘National Case Studies on Innovative River-related Practices’ to introduce the participants to several unique and innovative solutions for different aspects of urban river management.
- These solutions involve lake and pond rejuvenation, de-centralized used-water management, enhancing the river-related economy, groundwater management, flood management, and ‘International Case Studies’.
- These will focus on Innovative River-related practices in countries like Denmark, reuse of used water in Israel, floodplain management in the Netherlands, river health monitoring in the USA, pollution control in Japan, and water-sensitive city design in Australia.

New Zealand declares national emergency after Cyclone Gabrielle lashes North Island



- The New Zealand government has declared a national state of emergency after Cyclone Gabrielle lashed the North Island.
- Signing the declaration Minister for Emergency Management Kieran McAnulty said, this is an unprecedented weather event that is having major impacts across much of the North Island.
- He said, this is a significant disaster with a real threat to lives of New Zealanders as they are facing extensive floods, slips, damaged roads and infrastructure.
- Over 38 thousand homes were left without power following heavy rain and strong winds.
- Flood waters and landslides have cut off many settlements across the country including some near Auckland which is New Zealand's largest city.
- This is only the third time New Zealand has declared a state of emergency, the other two were the 2019 Christchurch terror attacks and 2020 Covid pandemic.

Noted painter Lalitha Lajmi passes away



- Noted painter Lalitha Lajmi passed away yesterday at the age of 90. She was sister of late actor-filmmaker Guru Dutt.
- The National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) shared the news of her demise.
- In its post, NGMA wrote, Lalitha Lajmi was born to a poet father and a poly-linguist writer mother in Kolkata in 1932.
- Coming from a family involved in the arts, Lajmi was very fond of classical dance and painting. She found her calling in painting.
- An unparalleled water-colourist, through her works she narrates a layered history of the modern Indian woman in the decades that followed Independence.
- Often her works reflect the hidden tensions that exist between men and women, captured in the different roles they play.
- Yet, her women are not meek individuals, but assertive and individualistic, with a strong autobiographical element.

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh to host Defence Ministers' Conclave at Aero show



- The 14th edition of Asia's biggest aero show - Aero India 2023 - at Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru got underway today. The Raksha Mantri will host Defence Ministers' Conclave tomorrow.
- Defence Ministers of friendly foreign countries will participate in the meeting, which has been organised on the theme 'Shared Prosperity through Enhanced Engagements in Defence (SPEED).
- The conclave would address aspects related to deepening cooperation for capacity building (through investments, R&D, joint venture, co-development, co-production and provisioning of defence equipment), training, space, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and maritime security to grow together.
- The conclave is an opportunity for the defence ministers to engage with each other to carry forward the 'Make in India, Make for the World' vision.
- On the sidelines of Aero India 2023, a number of bilateral meetings will be held at the levels of Raksha Mantri, Raksha Rajya Mantri, Chief of Defence Staff and Defence Secretary among others.

ICAI gets new president, vice president for 2023-24 term



- The Council of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) elected its new president and vice president.
- For the 2023-24 term, Aniket Sunil Talati will serve as the president of ICAI, while Ranjeet Kumar Agarwal will be the accounting body's vice president.
- At the helm of the ICAI's council, Talati and Agarwal will be responsible for organizing the three-tiered CA exam and looking after all administrative affairs.
- Talati has led various committees of the Branch and Regional Councils of ICAI and has been active as the director of its Indian Institute of Insolvency Professionals of ICAI (IIPI), Accounting Research Foundation (ICAI ARF), and Extensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) India, as per the ICAI official website.

- He is a member of various other ICAI boards, committees, and directorates.
- He is also the technical advisor to the ICAI's nominee on the Professional Accountants in Business (PAIB) advisory group of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC).
- Alongside this, Sunil Talati is also a board member of the South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA).
- He is taking over the post previously held by CA (Dr) Debashis Mitra.

Jean-Eric Vergne wins first E-Prix held in India



- Ten years after the unceremonious exit of Formula 1 from India, a global motorsport World Championship finally made a return to the country with the Formula E Hyderabad E-Prix.
- And the 33-lap race here on Sunday was nothing short of sensational.
- Wheel-to-wheel racing, crashes, penalties, overtaking, the unpredictability, the 46-minute race had all the drama and action for which a capacity crowd of 25,000 had turned out.
- They eventually got to see DS Penske's Jean-Eric Vergne win the inaugural all-electric race at the 2.83km Hyderabad street circuit here on Saturday.
- Nick Cassidy was second for Envision Racing with Porsche's Antonio Felix da Costa promoted to third in his 100th race after Envision's Sebastien Buemi was handed a 17-second post-race penalty for an overpower infringement.
- The first-ever Formula E race in India was hosted in Hyderabad, the race that also happens to be the first FIA-organised event in India in a decade.
- The Hyderabad E-Prix is the fourth race in the Formula E 2023 calendar, being preceded by Season 9 opener in Mexico City and two races in Diriyah (Saudi Arabia).
- The race itself was an action-packed affair, with the qualifying session and the main race producing some close results.

India's first electric AC double-decker bus inaugurated in Mumbai, services to begin soon



- India's first air-conditioned double-decker electric bus was inducted into the fleet of BEST- the civic transport public body in Mumbai.
- The wet-leased e-bus will be registered at the Regional Transport Office before it hits the road for the public.
- This air-conditioned double-decker electric bus is likely to ply on the routes in suburbs where conventional double-decker buses that run on diesel are currently operated.
- Lokesh Chandra, general manager of the Brihanmumbai Electricity Supply and Transport (BEST) Undertaking, informed that they are scheduled to receive 4-5 more double-decker air-conditioned e-buses in the next 8-10 days and a total of 20 such buses before March end from Switch Mobility, a subsidiary of automobile manufacture Ashok Leyland.
- The number of double-decker e-buses will reach 200 by this year-end.

Shahabuddin Chuppu elected Bangladesh's 22nd President



- A former judge and freedom fighter, Mohammad Shahabuddin Chuppu, was elected unopposed as Bangladesh's 22nd President.
- A gazette was issued on the appointment of the new Bangladesh President by the Chief Election Commissioner.
- According to the country's Chief Election Commission, 74-year-old Chuppu will replace President Mohammad Abdul Hamid.
- After his retirement as a district and sessions judge, Chuppu served as one of the commissioners of the independent Anti-Corruption Commission.
- He later joined politics and became a member of the Awami League Advisory Council, which comprises senior party leaders and technocrats.
- However, Chuppu will have to relinquish the party post to become the titular head of the State.
- Born in the northwestern Pabna district, Chuppu was a leader of Awami League's student and youth wings in the late 1960s and early 1970s.
- He also took part in the 1971 Liberation War and was imprisoned for waging a protest after the August 15, 1975 assassination of Bangladesh's founder Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman — the father of Prime Minister Hasina — in a military coup along with most of his family members.

Strict Anti-Copying Law comes into force in Uttarakhand with provision of 10 crore rupee fine & life imprisonment



- The country's strictest Anti-Copying Law has come into force in Uttarakhand.
- Governor Lieutenant General Gurmeet Singh has approved the Uttarakhand Competitive Examination (Measures for Prevention and Prevention of Unfair Means in Recruitment) Ordinance 2023.
- In view of this, the Anti-Copying Law is being described as the biggest anti-copying law in the country.
- This comes after the UKPSC paper leak which led to cancellation of exam for around 1.4 lakh government job aspirants.
- Under this Anti-Copying Law, a provision to impose a fine of 10 crores rupees along with life imprisonment or 10 years in jail for the copycat mafia.
- Apart from this, there is also a provision to attach the property of the copying mafia.
- Under the Uttarakhand Anti-Copying Law, Strict action will also be taken against the students who leak the paper.
- A provision has been made in the Act that if a student leaks paper in the recruitment examinations, or passes the examination by cheating, then that student will be banned for 10 years.
- This means that if a student is found indulging in this type of activity, he/she will not be able to appear in any recruitment examination for 10 years.

Bollywood actor Javed Khan Amrohi passes away



- Bollywood actor Javed Khan Amrohi passed away on Tuesday. He was in his early 70s.
- He was suffering from breathing issues, and he was bedridden for the past year.
- He was admitted to Surya Nursing Home in Santacruz, Mumbai, where he breathed his last after

his lungs failed.

- Javed Khan was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actor in 2001 for the film 'Lagaan'.
- He worked in about 150 films and carved a niche for himself in the industry.
- Apart from this, he also entertained the audience by playing different characters in the world of TV.

India become number one team in all formats



- India have become the No.1-ranked team in all formats after they displaced Australia to take the top spot in the ICC Test rankings.
- This is the first time India have achieved top ranking in all three formats at the same time.
- India is already the top-ranked team in T20Is and ODIs. India achieved this feat after beating Australia by an innings and 132 runs in the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Nagpur.
- India currently have 115 rating points and followed by Australia with 111 rating points.
- India will still need to beat Australia in the next Test in New Delhi to hold on to the top spot and strengthen their chances of qualifying for the World Test Championship final, which will be held in England in the month of June this year.

Rajasthan: Science Center and Planetarium to be constructed in Kota



- The Science Center and Planetarium will be constructed in Kota, Rajasthan.
- The Science Center and Planetarium will be one of the best science centers and planetariums in the world.
- About 35 crore 25 lakh rupees will be spent on these.

- An MoU was signed between the National Council of Science Museums and the Science and Technology Department of the Government of Rajasthan in this regard.
- National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture.
- It is the largest chain of science centers or museums under a single administrative umbrella in the world.
- There are 24 science centers or museums and one R & D laboratory and training center of NCSM, located in different states in India.
- The first science museum, Birla Industrial and Technological Museum (BITM), Kolkata under CSIR43, was opened on 2 May 1959.
- In July 1965, the second science museum of the country, the Visvesvaraya Industrial & Technological Museum (VITM) was opened in Bangalore.

Indian Army Gets 'World's First' Fully Operational SWARM Drone System; Capable Of Hitting Targets 50 Km Away



- NewSpace Research, a Bengaluru-based start-up has delivered SWARM drones to Indian Army, which makes the Army the first major armed force in the world to operationalise these high-density SWARM drones.
- This delivery may possibly be the world's first operational high density swarming UAS (Unmanned Aerial System) induction for military applications, especially given that most swarm drone research is yet to be operationalised across the world.
- The swarm of 100 drones is capable of hitting targets at least 50 kms away into enemy territory.
- The swarming systems were ordered under the emergency procurement (EP) and show that India has taken a global lead with induction of a cutting edge 'Made in India' technology which is at par, if not ahead, of its peers across the world.
- They added that this is a part of the government's Aatmanirbhar effort to indigenise critical and disruptive military technologies.
- These drones are capable of carrying bombs of a particular weight and can home into a target, like moving armoured columns, artillery positions, and infantry bunkers and attack.
- Swarm drones are the solution for a closely contested airspace where individual drones can be taken down.

RBI announces 2nd global hackathon HARBINGER 2023



- The Reserve Bank announced its second global hackathon – ‘HARBINGER 2023 – Innovation for Transformation’ with the theme ‘Inclusive Digital Services’.
- Registration for the hackathon starts from February 22, 2023.
- It had received 363 proposals submitted by teams from within India and from 22 other countries including the US, UK, Sweden, Singapore, Philippines, and Israel.
- Fintechs have been invited to develop solutions that have the potential to make digital financial services accessible to the differently-abled, facilitate efficient compliance, extend the reach of Central Bank Digital Currencies and enhance the scalability of blockchains.
- “Being part of HARBINGER 2023 gives an opportunity to the participants to get mentored by industry experts and exhibit their innovative solutions before an eminent jury and win exciting prizes in each category,” the RBI said.

FIFA confirms US, Mexico, Canada automatically in 2026 World Cup



- The U.S. men’s national team, along with Mexico and Canada, will automatically qualify for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.
- The three countries won the right to host the World Cup in a united North American bid.
- FIFA historically has given host nations the right to play in the World Cup without going through the usual qualification tournaments, though this is the first time FIFA had to set aside three host bids.
- The tournament is set to expand from 32 teams to 48 in 2026. Another three berths will be awarded to CONCACAF nations via qualifying.
- While the U.S. and Mexico tend to qualify for most World Cups, it was good news for Canada, whose men’s national team broke a 36-year drought between World Cup appearances when it qualified for Qatar in 2022. Canada lost all three of its group-stage matches.
- The FIFA Council also determined its timetable for bidding for the right to host the 2030 World Cup.

- That meeting will be separate from FIFA's meeting to select a host for the 2027 Women's World Cup, which will be held first, earlier in 2024.

Govt launches app 'Khanan Prahari' and CMSMS to curb unauthorized mining



- The government has launched a mobile app namely 'Khanan Prahari' and a web app Coal Mine Surveillance and Management System (CMSMS) for reporting unauthorized coal mining activities so that monitoring and taking suitable action on it can be done by concerned Law and Order enforcing authority.
- 462 cases have been reported on the Apps till January this year. Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said this in a written reply in Rajya Sabha today.
- The Minister said that CMSMS has been developed to curb illegal mining and take transparent action as an e-Governance initiative of the government on the use of Space Technology.
- Concrete walls have been erected on the mouth of the abandoned mines to prevent access and illegal activities in these areas.
- Surprise raids/checks are being conducted jointly by security personnel and law and order authorities of the concerned State Government.
- Dumping of the overburden is being done on the outcrop zones.
- Installation of check posts at vulnerable points.
- Training of existing security/CISF personnel, refresher training, and basic training of recruits in security discipline for strengthening the security setup;
- Maintaining close liaison with the State authorities.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Indian-American Neal Mohan to be new CEO of YouTube after Wojcicki resigns



- An Indian-American Neal Mohan will be the next Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of YouTube after Susan Wojcicki announced her resignation citing personal reasons.
- Taking to Twitter, YouTube Creators informed about Wojcicki's resignation and thanked her for contributing to the online video-sharing platform.
- Neal Mohan is currently the Chief Product Officer of YouTube.
- Before joining YouTube, Mohan was the Senior Vice President, Display and Video Ads at Google.
- In a blog post, Wojcicki said that she will focus on family, health, and personal projects she is passionate about.

India International Seafood Show to conclude today in Kolkata



- The biggest Seafood Show in Asia, India International Seafood Show will conclude today in Kolkata.
- The three-day event organized by the Marine Products Export Development Authority MPEDA in association with the Seafood Exporters Association of India began on Wednesday.
- It featured a buyer-seller meeting with a particular focus on G20 countries.
- Inaugurating the event, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel said that India

has set a target of achieving 14 billion dollars in exports of marine products by 2025 and efforts are being made to achieve the target.

- Around five thousand delegates from India and other countries are attending the event.
- The Government in the latest Union budget announced a new sub-scheme named Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana and has allocated six thousand crore rupees.
- A custom duty benefit of 2.5 per cent is also proposed for inputs of shrimp feed.

Joint military exercise between India and Japan to begin at Camp Imazu today in Japan



- The 4th edition of joint military exercise, “EX DHARMA GUARDIAN”, between India and Japan will begin today at Camp Imazu in Shiga province of Japan.
- It will continue till 2nd of next month. The annual training event with Japan is crucial and significant in terms of security challenges faced by both nations in the backdrop of the current global situation.
- The scope of this exercise covers platoon-level joint training on operations in jungle and semi-urban or urban terrain.
- Troops of the Garhwal Rifles Regiment of the Indian Army and an Infantry Regiment from the Middle Army of the Japan Ground Self Defence Force are participating in the exercise this year to share experiences gained during various operations in order to enhance interoperability in planning and execution.
- This joint exercise will enable the two armies to share best practices in tactics, techniques and procedures of conducting tactical operations under a UN Mandate, It will also help develop interoperability, bonhomie, camaraderie and friendship between the two armies.

Five day mega air show Aero India to conclude in Bengaluru today



- The curtains will fall on the Five days Aero India show in Bengaluru today. The mega show saw participation from over 98 countries.

- During the event, 73 CEOs from India and abroad, Defence Ministers from 32 countries and Chiefs of the Air Staff from 29 countries interacted with their Indian counterparts and Government functionaries during the show.
- Various countries exhibited their defense equipment and gadgets. India Pavilion saw participation from 115 Indian companies which displayed 227 products made in India.
- Fully configured LCA Tejas Mark 1 was the highlight during the event.

Tulsidas Balam - Only surviving member of Indian football's 1956 Olympics team passes away at 86



- Tulsidas Balam, one of the country's finest footballers and a member of the golden era of Indian football (1951-1962), passed away. He was 86.
- He played in two Olympics in 1956 and 1960 and reached the pinnacle of Asian football when India, under the guidance of legendary coach Syed Abdul Rahim, won the Asian Games gold in Jakarta, beating South Korea 2-1 in 1962.
- Balam scored 131 goals, including 14 for India, across seven seasons.
- Balam made his mark playing football for the East Bengal of Kolkata, and captained the team in 1961-62.
- He was one of the best players of the golden age of Indian football of the 1950s and 1960s.
- His playing position was as a center forward or as a left winger. In 1962, he received Arjuna Award from the Government of India.
- The Government of West Bengal awarded him 'Banga Vibhushan' in 2013

Ladakh to host India's first frozen-lake marathon 'Last Run' at Pangong Tso



- The Pangong Tso Lake in Ladakh will host the first-ever frozen lake marathon on 20th February 2023, at an altitude of roughly 13,862 feet.

- The first-ever frozen lake marathon which is 21-kilometer is India's first of its kind.
- The marathon will occur at a height of 13,862 feet and it will be the first of its kind to ever take place in the globe at this altitude.
- On 20th February Adventure Sports foundation of Ladakh (ASFL) in collaboration with Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Leh and Ladakh Tourism Department is going to organize India's first 21 km long Pangong Frozen Lake Marathon.
- It would be an attempt to make a Guinness world record for the world's highest frozen lake marathon according to Chief Executive Councilor LAHDC Leh Advocate Tashi Gyalsen.
- Deputy commissioner Leh Shrikant Balasaheb Suse informed that the purpose of organizing this frozen lake marathon is to promote sustainable tourism and create awareness about climate and the environment.
- The marathon is the brainchild of the Adventure Sports Foundation of Ladakh (ASFL), who have nicknamed it "The Last Run" to highlight a bleak reality given the precarious state of Himalayan glaciers due to global warming, parts of the lake may be unfit for a race of this kind in the years to come.