



## CURRENT AFFAIRS 13th Feb 2024

### International News

#### 1. India To Replace Military Personnel With Technical Staff In Maldives



India has announced the replacement of military personnel operating aviation platforms in the Maldives with competent Indian technical personnel.

MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal confirmed the decision, stating that the current military personnel will be substituted with skilled technical personnel. This move aims to maintain operational expertise while addressing the Maldives' request for the withdrawal of Indian troops.

The first aircraft's military personnel will be replaced by Indian technical personnel by March 10. Replacement of military personnel in the remaining two aircraft will be finalized by May 10.

### State News

#### 2. Gupteswar Forest, Odisha's New Biodiversity Heritage Site



Odisha has taken a significant step towards conservation by declaring the Gupteswar forest in Koraput district as its fourth Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS). This declaration marks a pivotal moment in the state's environmental conservation efforts, joining the ranks of Mandasaru, Mahendragiri, and Gandhamardan, which have previously been recognized for their unique biodiversity.

The Gupteswar forest spans over 350 hectares. This area is not just a haven for a wide array of flora and fauna but also holds a sacred significance, with its groves traditionally worshipped by the local community.

### **3.Hyderabad's 36th National Book Fair: February 9-19**



The NTR Stadium in Hyderabad hosts the 36th edition of the National Book Fair. Organized by the Hyderabad Book Fair Society, the event kicked off on February 9. The book fair runs until February 19.

Drawing bibliophiles (People who love and collect books) from all corners of the city, the fair is a highly anticipated annual event. The fair aims to revive the reading culture.

The venue is named after civil rights activist Gaddar. The stage bears the name of Ravva Srihari, a renowned scholar in Sanskrit and Telugu. A monument honoring Telangana martyrs is erected on the exhibition premises.

#### **4.Uttar Pradesh Implements Semiconductor Policy: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Addresses Assembly Queries**



During the state assembly's budget discussion, CM Yogi responded to queries from the opposition, emphasizing the importance of stability and sustainability in driving infrastructure and industrial development in Uttar Pradesh.

He highlighted the proactive measures taken by the state government, including the establishment of the Bundelkhand Industrial Development Authority (BIDA) between Kanpur and Jhansi, a significant development after 46 years.

CM Yogi underscored the strategic importance of semiconductors in advancing industrial growth. Situated between Kanpur and Jhansi, this location marks a significant achievement after 46 years.

### **Defence News**

#### **5.Defence Minister Unveils The Statue General Bipin Rawat In Dehradun**



In a memorable event at TonsBridge School in Dehradun, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Uttarakhand's CM Pushkar Singh Dhami unveiled a statue of General Bipin Rawat, who was India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).

During the event, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh shared stories of General Rawat's courage and dedication. He talked about an incident which motivated General Rawat to improve the operations of the Indian Army along the borders with Pakistan and China when he was the Army Chief and later as the CDS.

Singh praised General Rawat for his commitment to the country's security and his role as a true symbol of the military's values. He mentioned how General Rawat's life motto, 'Die with your boots on,' showed his dedication to duty until his last breath.

## Economy News

### **6.Urban Jobless Rate In India Declines To 6.5% In Q3FY24: PLFS Data Analysis**



The latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data released by the National Statistical Office indicates a continued improvement in India's urban labour markets.



The urban jobless rate has decreased to 6.5% from 6.6% in the previous quarter, showing a steady decline from the peak of 12.6% during the Covid-affected quarter of FY22.

Although the unemployment rate among women remains stagnant at 8.6%, there is a decrease among men to 5.8% from 6% in the previous quarter. Additionally, the unemployment rate for the young (15-29) has sharply decreased to 16.5% in Q3 from 17.3% in Q2, indicating a robust labor market for first-time job seekers.

### **7.India's Retail Inflation Is At 3-Mth Low To 5.1% In Jan, IIP Witnessed 3.8% Growth In Dec**



In January 2024, India's retail inflation reached a three-month low of 5.1%, while the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) exhibited a growth of 3.8% in December 2023, showcasing a favorable trend in both sectors.

Consumer Price Index (CPI) indicates a 5.1% year-on-year (Y-o-Y) retail inflation rate in January 2024, down from 5.69% in December and 6.52% in January last year. Notable decline attributed to moderation in prices of cereals, milk, and fruit, while vegetables, pulses, and spices sustain double-digit inflation. Protein-rich items like meat and eggs experience slight price acceleration.

### **Business News**

### **8.RCF Plans To Launch Vande Metro Prototype By April**



The Rail Coach Factory (RCF) aims to roll out the first prototype of the Vande Metro coach by April. A total of 16 such coaches are expected to be ready by the later part of the 2024-25 financial year.

The Vande Metro is designed on the concept of India's first indigenous semi-high-speed train, Vande Bharat, catering to intercity passengers covering distances of up to 250 km. Vande Metro coaches will enhance passenger experience and accessibility, with each coach capable of carrying 280 passengers (100 seating capacity and 180 standing capacity). The 3×3 bench-type seating arrangement maximizes passenger capacity for a comfortable medium-distance commute.

### **9. Paytm Explores Third-Party Path For Easy UPI Access**

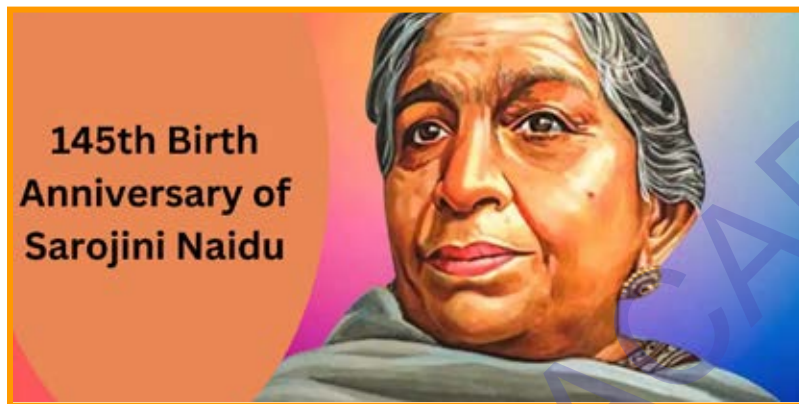


Paytm's parent company, One97 Communications, is exploring transitioning its payments service into a third-party payment app (TPAP) to ensure uninterrupted access to the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) for its customers.

Talks have begun with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), the governing body overseeing the UPI ecosystem in the country. By adopting the third-party payment app model, Paytm aims to align itself with other major players in the UPI space, such as PhonePe, Google Pay, and Amazon Pay.

## Important Days News

### **10.145th Birth Anniversary Of Sarojini Naidu, National Women's Day**



February 13, 2024 marks the 145th birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu, a distinguished figure in India's struggle for independence and a celebrated poet known as the "Nightingale of India."

This day is also recognized as the National Women's Day as she played a pivotal role in advocating for women's rights. Naidu's literary prowess earned her the title of the "Nightingale of India."

Her poetry, characterized by vivid imagery and lyrical quality, resonated deeply with the Indian nationalist sentiment. Published in 1912, "In the Bazaars of Hyderabad" remains one of her most celebrated works.

### **11.National Productivity Day 2024, Date, History, Theme & Significance**



Every year, India marks February 12 as National Productivity Day, launching the beginning of the Indian Productivity Week, which lasts until February 18. With AI as the focal point of National Productivity Day 2024, the NPC highlights the technology's potential as a catalyst for economic growth.

This year's theme, "Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Productivity Engine for Economic Growth," is a testament to the NPC's vision of harnessing cutting-edge technologies to propel India's economic growth.

## **12. International Epilepsy Day 2024**



International Epilepsy Day, observed on the 2nd Monday of February each year, is a pivotal event in the global healthcare calendar that aims to unite individuals affected by epilepsy.



This year, the day was marked on 12 February 2024, underlining the ongoing efforts to foster community and support among epilepsy patients worldwide.

The theme for International Epilepsy Day 2024, “Milestones on My Epilepsy Journey”, emphasizes the importance of recognizing and celebrating personal achievements amidst the challenges posed by epilepsy.

## **Schemes News**

### **13.Prime Minister Narendra Modi Unveils ‘PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana’**



Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has announced the launch of an ambitious scheme – the ‘PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana’.

Aimed at fostering a greener future and facilitating the nation’s march towards energy self-sufficiency, this initiative is set to revolutionize the energy landscape of India.

This pioneering project, with an earmarked investment exceeding Rs 75,000 crore, is designed to illuminate one crore households across the country by providing up to 300 units of free electricity every month, generated through solar power.

### **14.Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Enhances Pension Under MBPY**



In a move aimed at providing relief to beneficiaries of social security schemes in Odisha, CM Naveen Patnaik has announced a significant increase in monthly pension amounts under the Madhu Babu Pension Yojana (MBPY).

A total of 36.75 lakh beneficiaries, including elderly individuals, widows, persons with disabilities, unmarried women, AIDS patients, transgender individuals, orphan children, and widows of COVID victims, will receive support.

The new monthly amounts are set at Rs 1,000 for individuals aged up to 79 and Rs 1,200 for those aged 80 and above. This initiative aims to provide crucial financial assistance to vulnerable groups, ensuring their well-being and dignity..