



RYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEBRUARY 21, 2023

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **PM Narendra Modi and his Singapore counterpart Lee Hsien Loong - will virtually witness the launch of cross-border connectivity between the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) of India and PayNow of Singapore on February 21.**
- ✓ The launch will be done by Shaktikanta Das, governor, RBI, and Ravi Menon, MD, Monetary Authority of Singapore
- ✓ The linkage of the payment systems would enable residents of both countries in faster and cost-efficient transfer of cross-border remittances.

APPOINTMENTS

- **On February 20, the government - appointed former commerce secretary B V R Subrahmanyam as the new chief executive of Niti Aayog**



- ✓ He replaces Parameswaran Iyer who will move to Washington as India's executive director to the World Bank, after just seven months in the think tank, Niti Aayog
- ✓ As a result, Rajesh Khullar, a 1988 batch IAS officer from Haryana, will return to his state cadre before the end of his term at the World Bank.

- ✓ Earlier, Iyer had resigned from the IAS to take up an assignment at the World Bank only to return to India to drive the Swachh Bharat programme, before heading back to the US.
- ✓ Subrahmanyam, who will be the fourth CEO of Niti Aayog, has been instrumental in signing the negotiation of free trade agreements (FTAs) in his role as commerce secretary.
- ✓ The former IAS officer from the Chhattisgarh cadre played a key role in the revamp of the Capital's Pragati Maidan, the venue for the G20 leaders' summit scheduled for later this year.
- ✓ With long years in the PMO, working initially with Manmohan Singh and subsequently with Narendra Modi, he was selected to serve as the chief secretary of Jammu & Kashmir after the special status granted to it was revoked.
- ✓ Subrahmanyam is seen as an officer who can drive the government's initiatives on the economy while keeping the social and political aspects in mind.

SPORTS

- **Tennis legend Novak Djokovic – to reach another milestone next week after equalling Steffi Graf's all-time record for most weeks spent at number one of 377.**



- ✓ The 35-year-old Serbian remains top of the latest ATP rankings released on February 20
- ✓ This brings him level with the amount of weeks that Graf spent as women's world No. 1.
- ✓ Djokovic returned to No. 1 spot for a seventh time after his victory in the Australian Open at the end of January which was a record equalling 22nd Grand Slam singles title.

INTERNATIONAL DAY

➤ International Mother Language Day - February 21



- ✓ The day is observed every year to highlight the cultural and linguistic diversity in the country
- ✓ Theme 2023- 'multilingual education - a necessity to transform education.'
- ✓ International Mother Language Day was declared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) General Conference in November 1999.
- ✓ The General Assembly of the United Nations supported the declaration of a United Nations Day in 2002.
- ✓ It was the initiative of Bangladesh with the broader idea of preserving and protecting all the languages used by the people.
- ✓ Language Movement Day, also called Language Martyrs' Day, is observed in Bangladesh on February 21
- ✓ The day commemorates the language martyrs of East Pakistan who fought imposition of Urdu and established Bangla as their official language nearly two decades before Bangladesh became an independent country.
- ✓ Out of 7000 languages spoken in the world, 2000 are spoken in India itself
- ✓ In India, 22 languages - Hindi, Sanskrit, Punjabi, Santhali, Dogri, Nepali, Bodo, Maithili, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Urdu, Oriya, Konkani, Kashmiri, Manipuri, Kannada, Bengali, Sindhi, Gujarati and Marathi - are constitutionally recognised as mother tongues.
- ✓ As per the 2018 Census report, India recorded 19,500 distinct entries for "mother tongue", of which only 121 were categorised and even fewer constitutionally recognized.
- ✓ The General Assembly proclaimed 2008 as the International Year of Languages, to promote unity in diversity and international understanding, through multilingualism and multiculturalism and named the UNESCO to serve as the lead agency for the Year
- ✓ Eminent linguist and folklorist Mahendra Kumar Mishra from Odisha has been nominated for UNESCO's International Mother Language Award 2023 for his lifetime service for promotion of mother language in India.

REPORT

- **Tamil Nadu and eight other states - are named among top 50 regions across the world “at risk of damage to the built environment” from eight climate change hazards.**
- ✓ The other states that figure among the top 50 provinces in Asia that are at risk of damage are Maharashtra, Bihar, UP, Assam, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Punjab and Kerala.
- ✓ According to the Cross Dependency Initiative, part of the Climate Risk Group, more than 2,600 territories around the world face such hazards by 2050.
- ✓ Top among the eight climate change hazards are flooding and coastal inundation, apart from extreme heat, forest fire, soil movement, riverine and surface flooding, extreme wind and freeze thaw.

