

## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-MARCH 17, 2023**

### **TAMIL NADU**

- **The Tamil Nadu police - will celebrate the golden jubilee year of women in the Tamil Nadu Police department at Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium on March 17.**
  - ✓ Chief minister MK Stalin will be the chief guest for the event.
  - ✓ During the occasion, CM Stalin will release a special cover and launch the 'Aval' project.
  - ✓ The CM will also flag off a bicycle rally and address the gathering.
  - ✓ State ministers, the mayor, members of parliament, members of the legislative assembly, representatives of local bodies and government officials will also be present during the occasion.
  
- **The Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority (CMDA) - has launched a 'Lakefront Reconnect Competition' calling for designs from top architectural firms in the country**
  - ✓ The competition is for a Rs.100 crore project involving the development of 10 lakefront areas in Chennai by the CMDA and the water resources department.
  - ✓ The lakes for which designs are being called for are those at Perumbakkam, Retteri, Mudichur, Madambakkam, Sembakkam, Ayanambakkam, Velachery, Adambakkam, Puzhal and Kulathur.
  - ✓ The competition will mainly look at designs of models to replenish and conserve these lakes to re-establish the connection between people and water.
  - ✓ The firms that will participate in the contest should have one qualified architect, landscape architect, civil engineer and professional in any other discipline.
  - ✓ They have to come up with designs for at least one lake and submit them before April 17
  - ✓ After the results are out, the tenders for the projects will be finalised in June.
  - ✓ Current lake health, availability of land and suitability to the surrounding neighbourhood shall be studied before coming up with the design.

- ✓ Physical activities, open spaces, bird watching facilities and stages for performing arts and experiential landscape can all be part of the structures.
- ✓ They will also have walking tracks, cycling tracks, open gym, lake boundary enhancement, lake rejuvenation, lake edge treatment, slope treatment, themed gardens, constructed wetlands, sewage treatment plants or water purifying methods
- ✓ The design may also include temporary structure, parking, ticketing facilities, amphitheatres, outdoor activities, canteen, street furniture, water sports, decks, fishing deck, play area, outdoor work spaces, public convenience, miawaki urban forest, boating and jetties.
- ✓ The participating firms have been asked to keep the unique location and natural features of each of the lakes in mind while coming up with the designs.

## NATIONAL

- **On March 16, the ministries of Ayush and rural development - signed an agreement for developing skilled personnel for Ayush healthcare system and Ayush management sectors**



- ✓ Under the agreement, an estimated 22,000 youth from rural India are to be trained in FY 2023-24 with minimum 70% placement guarantee.
- ✓ In this regard, the MoU was signed between Ayush ministry and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana.
- ✓ The agreement provides an opportunity for the rural youth to be trained in the National Skills Qualification framework aligned courses available on the National Qualification Register under Deen Dayal Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) scheme.
- ✓ Some of the courses to be offered under this framework are Panchakarma Technician, Panchakarma Assistant, Ayurvedic Masseur, Kshara Karma Technician and Cupping Therapy Assistant.

## INTERNATIONAL

- **On March 16, Poland' President Andrzej Duda - has promised to send four Soviet-designed MIG fighter jets to Ukraine in the coming days.**



- ✓ The transfer would make Poland the first NATO member to have delivered the fighter jets
- ✓ Ukraine's air force is familiar with MiG-29s and could use the planes right away.
- ✓ Poland has been using the MIG fighter jets since 1989 and has 28 of them.
- ✓ Poland's air force would replace the planes it gives to Ukraine with South Korea-made FA-50 fighters and American-made F-35s.
- ✓ Poland was also the first NATO nation to hand German-made Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine, last month.
- ✓ NATO allies in the former communist east such as Poland and Slovakia have been particularly vocal supporters of Ukraine since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

## PERSONALITIES

- **The U.S.Senate - has confirmed Indian-American flight test engineer Ravi Chaudhary as the Assistant Secretary of Defence for the US Air Force, one of the top civilian leadership positions in the Pentagon.**



- ✓ On March 15, the Senate voted 65-29 to confirm the former Air Force officer's nomination.
- ✓ Chaudhary previously served as a director of advanced programmes and innovation in the office of commercial space at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

- ✓ During his service in the US air force from 1993 to 2015, Chaudhary completed a variety of operational, engineering, and senior staff assignments.
- ✓ As a C-17 pilot, he conducted global flight operations, including many combat missions in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as ground deployment as the director of the personnel recovery centre at multi-national corps in Iraq.
- ✓ As a flight test engineer, he was responsible for flight certification of military avionics and hardware for the force's modernisation programmes supporting flight safety.
- ✓ As a systems engineer, Chaudhary supported Nasa's ISS protection activities to ensure the safety of Nasa astronauts.
- ✓ He also served as a member of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders during the Obama administration.

## **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT**

- **Isro - is all set to launch the second batch of 36 low earth orbit satellites for UK-based OneWeb on March 26**
- ✓ The internet constellation will be launched onboard India's heaviest launch vehicle, LVM-III from Sriharikota.
  - ✓ Earlier, Isro has redesignated the launch vehicle as LVM-III (Launch Vehicle Mark III) from GSLV Mk-III
  - ✓ The reason behind changing the name of the vehicle from GSLV to LVM is that the rocket will not deploy the satellites in the geosynchronous orbit, but in Low Earth orbit (LEO) at an altitude of 1,200 kilometers
  - ✓ The geosynchronous orbit, on the other hand, is located 35,786 kilometers above Earth's equator.
- ✓ This will be the 18th launch and third launch this year for OneWeb, which will complete its first-generation constellation for providing internet around Earth.
- ✓ This mission also marks the company's second satellite deployment from India.
- ✓ In October last year, OneWeb had launched 36 satellites from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota in collaboration with Isro and NewSpace India Limited.
- ✓ The private satellite communications company, OneWeb has India's Bharti Enterprises as a major investor and shareholder.
- ✓ NewSpace India, a central public sector enterprise under the department of space, had earlier signed two launch service contracts with the London-headquartered Network Access Associated Limited that runs OneWeb.
- ✓ On March 10, the company had conducted the 17th launch to deploy 40 internet satellites onboard SpaceX's Falcon-9 rocket, from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida, thereby taking its total satellites to 582 in space.
- ✓ The company targets to take its total satellite count in space to 648.



- ✓ The British government-backed company in March last year canceled a planned launch of 36 broadband satellites aboard Russia's Soyuz rocket after Russia's space chief halted the mission in the wake of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

## DEFENCE

- **On March 16, the defence ministry - gave preliminary approval to major military modernisation projects worth Rs.70,584 crore**
- ✓ These include the purchase of 69 maritime helicopters, 225 BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles and 307 heavy-duty artillery guns.
- ✓ The Rajnath Singh-led defence acquisitions council (DAC) accorded the acceptance of necessity (AoN) to all the projects under the 'Buy IDDM' (indigenously designed, developed and manufactured) category
- ✓ Some of these projects are still in the design and development stage, while others will have to be eventually cleared by the PM-led cabinet committee on security because of their huge costs.
- ✓ The biggest proposal that was cleared was for 60 utility helicopters-marine which are being built by Hindustan Aeronautics at a cost of Rs 32,000 crore.
- ✓ The DAC also approved the Rs.3,800 crore acquisition of nine ALH Mark-III choppers for the Coast Guard.
- ✓ Another major purchase was for the frontline destroyers and frigates for 225 BrahMos extended range missiles at the cost of Rs 20,000 crore
  - ✓ These missiles travel at a speed of Mach 2.8, which is almost three times the speed of sound.
  - ✓ The striking range of these missiles has now been increased to 450 km from the original 290 km.
- ✓ Another important approval was the DAC's clearance for the Rs 8,526 crore purchase of 307 advanced towed artillery gun systems (ATAGS), which are the best in their class with a maximum strike range of 48-km.
  - ✓ This would be the first order for the domestic 155mm/52 calibre ATAGS whose production partners are Bharat Forge and Tata Advanced Systems.
- ✓ Of the total approvals, Navy proposals constitute more than Rs 56,000 crore, which includes indigenous BrahMos missiles, Shakti Electronic Warfare systems and Utility Helicopters-Maritime.
- ✓ The AoN for Medium Speed Marine Diesel Engine under Make-I category is significant as it marks the first time India is venturing into development and manufacturing of such engines

## APPOINTMENTS

- **Former Los Angeles Mayor, Eric Garcetti - has been confirmed as the new US ambassador to India.**
- ✓ The Senate voted 52-42 on March 15 to confirm Eric Garcetti to be the next U.S. ambassador to India.



- ✓ Garcetti was originally nominated by President Joe Biden in July 2021, and renominated in January this year.
- ✓ The 52-year-old will succeed Kenneth Juster, who was nominated by then President Donald Trump and became the envoy to India in May 2017, and resigned after the change in presidency from Trump to Biden.
- ✓ The US Embassy in India has been without an ambassador since January 2021, the longest stretch in the history of US-India relations that the post has been vacant.
- ✓ Apart from serving as the mayor of Los Angeles from July 2013 to December 2022, Garcetti also served as an officer in the United States Navy Reserve for 12 years.
- ✓ Before becoming the mayor, he served as President of the Los Angeles City Council from 2006 to 2012, and as a Council member of the 13th District before that.

## AWARDS

- **President Droupadi Murmu - presented the President's Colour to Indian Navy's gunnery school, INS Dronacharya in Kerala's Fort Kochi on March 16**



- ✓ The achievement coincides with the diamond jubilee (75 years) of the Indian Navy's Gunnery School that was established in 1948
- ✓ On March 8, 1978 it was commissioned as INS Venduruthy-II that later got rechristened as INS Dronacharya on November 27, 1978

- ✓ Later, President Droupadi Murmu visited India's first indigenously built aircraft carrier INS Vikrant at the Cochin Shipyard and interacted with the officers and sailors on board.
- ✓ Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Harikumar were among those present on the occasion.
- ✓ Notably, the President's Colour or the Nishan is considered the highest honour that the Supreme Commander, President of India, bestows on a unit for its exceptional service to the Nation, both in peace and in war.
- ✓ INS Dronacharya is entrusted with the training of officers and sailors of the Navy, Coast Guard and friendly foreign maritime forces on all aspects of gunnery and missile warfare.
- ✓ The unit is the nodal centre for training of Sagar Prahari Bal and Navy's centre for training in constabulary operations for several Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Nations.
- ✓ It is responsible for training personnel in small arms, missiles and artillery, radar and defensive countermeasures.
- ✓ The unit is also the training authority for drill and ceremonies in the Navy and Coast Guard
- ✓ INS Dronacharya was designated as the Centre for Excellence in Gunnery and Missile Warfare for Indian Navy under the Southern Naval Command in Kochi in 2004.
- ✓ The unit is affiliated with the Indian Army School of Artillery in the spirit of jointmanship.

## OBITUARY

- **British historian, author and academician Patrick French - died in London after battling cancer for four years on March 16**



- ✓ Born in England in 1966, Patrick studied literature at Edinburgh University and arrived in India as a young journalist in 1998, for a New Yorker assignment

- ✓ He is best known for his authorized biography of Nobel laureate VS Naipaul, “The World Is What It Is”, which won the US National Book Critics Circle Award and the Hawthornden Prize
  - ✓ His famous works, translated into more than a dozen languages, include “Younghusband: The Last Great Imperial Adventurer (1994)”, a biography of British explorer Francis Younghusband, “Liberty or Death: India’s Journey to Independence and Division”, “India: A Portrait” and “Tibet, Tibet: A Personal History of a Lost Land”.
  - ✓ French also held visiting positions at the University of Warwick, University of the South Pacific, NYU Abu Dhabi and University of Pennsylvania
  - ✓ He won several awards for his work, which included the Royal Society of Literature WH Heinemann Prize, the Somerset Maugham Award and the Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year Award.
  - ✓ French was also appointed as the inaugural dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at Ahmedabad University in July 2017, from which he stepped down in July last year
  - ✓ He also held a visiting position at Ashoka University
  - ✓ In 2003, French declined the Order of the British Empire (OBE) to preserve his ‘independence as a writer’
- **Nagaland's oldest resident, Pupirei Pfukha, who was 121 years old - passed away on March 15 at her residence in Kigwema village, in Kohima district**



- ✓ She is survived by 18 grandchildren, 56 great-grandchildren and 12 great-great-grandchildren.
- ✓ A 1982-issued voter identity card by the state election department is the only document that proves her age.
- ✓ Witness to World War II and Spanish Flu, Pfukha reportedly became blind in her eighties and had also lost her hearing ability some years back
- ✓ In the Nagaland assembly polls held last month, Pfukha cast her vote through postal ballot.



- ✓ Pfukha was a witness to World War II when Kigwema village was turned into a camp of the invading Japanese soldiers.
- ✓ She took all possible care of the children and temporarily shifted to another village to save the family from any possible confrontation.
- ✓ Pfukha is credited for bringing an environment of education in the village as her elder son was the first matriculate and graduate from Kigwema.

## SPORTS

- **Youth Affairs and Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur - inaugurated the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of IBA Women's World Boxing Championships in New Delhi on March 16.**



- ✓ The Boxing Federation of India is hosting the prestigious tournament from March 15 to 26.
- ✓ A total of 324 women boxers from about 65 countries are taking part in the championship in 12 weight categories, which involves a total prize money of \$2.4 million
- ✓ The Championship is taking place in India for the third time after 2006 and 2018, the most for any country.
- ✓ The Indian team of 12 boxers for the event includes 2020 Tokyo Bronze medallist, Lovlina Borgohain and the current world champion in the 50kg category, Nikhat Zareen.
- ✓ India has risen to the third position from 44th position in the latest International Boxing Association, IBA world rankings.
- **Gianni Infantino - was re-elected as the president of the world football governing body, FIFA, at organisation's 73rd Congress held in Kigali, Rwanda on March 13.**
- ✓ Infantino stood unopposed and his election as FIFA president by the 211 member federations for the term of 2023-2027 was just a formality.

- ✓ Gianni Infantino has been in charge of FIFA since 2016 when he won a 5-way race to replace former president Sepp Blatter and retained his position unopposed three years later.



- ✓ Infantino is now set to stay in the job until after the end of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, which will be co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico.
- ✓ Infantino promised record revenues in the next four-year cycle for the premier body on the back of expanded men's and women's World Cup tournaments and the introduction of a 32-team Club World Cup.
  - ✓ The men's World Cup will increase from 32 teams to 48 for the next edition in the USA, Canada and Mexico in 2026, while the women's World Cup will feature 32 teams for the first time in Australia and New Zealand later this year.
  - ✓ Infantino has also announced projected income of \$11 billion in the four years up to 2026, compared to \$7.5 billion in the last four-year cycle ending in 2022.

## NATIONAL DAY

### ➤ National Vaccination Day – March 16



- ✓ National Vaccination Day is celebrated every year to spread awareness about the importance of vaccination for the human health.

- ✓ Vaccines provide immunity to the body against future diseases and have reduced the prevalence of several deadly diseases like measles, chicken pox, tetanus, rubella, polio, and most recently Covid-19.
- ✓ The day was first observed in the year 1995 when the government of India officially launched the Pulse Polio Immunisation program to eradicate polio from the country.
- ✓ On March 16, 1995, the first dose of the oral polio vaccine was administered in India as part of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Polio Eradication Initiative, which began in 1988.
- ✓ The vaccination program was popularised through a nationwide campaign called 'Do Boond Zindagi Ki'.
- ✓ Children of age 0-5 years are administered two drops of the vaccine orally at public health centres.
- ✓ According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the last Polio case was reported in West Bengal's Howrah in 2011 and the WHO declared India Polio free on March 27, 2014.
- ✓ The government of India launched Mission Indradhanush in 2014 to ensure full immunisation with all available vaccines for children up to two years of age and pregnant women.
- ✓ The Mission provides vaccination against Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Tetanus, Polio, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis B, Meningitis and Pneumonia, Haemophilus Influenzae Type B infections, Japanese Encephalitis (JE), Rotavirus, Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine (PCV) and Measles-Rubella (MR).
- ✓ India is now moving towards the eradication of measles and rubella through the vaccination of over 324 million children through MR vaccination campaigns and has set a target of 2023 for the same.

