

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS-APRIL 16,2023

STATES

- **The government of Himachal Pradesh – has recently launched a new scheme ‘Sukh-Ashraya Yojana’**
- ✓ The scheme aims to provide care, protection, development, and self-reliance to needy orphans, semi-orphans, and specially-abled children in the state
- ✓ Under the new scheme, 6,000 destitute children of the state will be adopted as “Children of the State”, so that they will become self-reliant over a period of time
- ✓ The state government will nurture these children as guardians and help them reintegrate into the mainstream of society.
- ✓ During the recent budget session, the state has passed the Himachal Pradesh Sukh-Ashraya (Care, Protection and Self-Reliance of Children) Bill, 2023
- ✓ The Sukh-Ashraya Bill will provide clothing allowance and festival allowance to the children living in the Child Care and After Care Institutions.
- ✓ Further, the government will open and contribute to recurring deposit accounts for these children.
- ✓ These children would be given the opportunity for yearly exposure visits within and outside the state.
- ✓ The state government will be providing shelter, food, clothing, etc., till the age of 27 years to these children along with higher education, vocational training, skill development, and coaching facilities.
- ✓ Apart from stipends to meet their personal expenses, the government will also provide them with financial assistance to establish their own start-ups.
- ✓ The bill also has a provision to provide three Biswas land allotments and housing grants to landless orphans.

NATIONAL

- **On April 15, the home ministry - approved conduct of the recruitment examination for constable (general duty) in 13 regional languages, in addition to Hindi and English**

- ✓ The decision will help lakhs of youths overcome the language barrier in their aspirations of joining the central armed police forces (CAPFs)
 - ✓ Starting January 1, 2024, the additional 13 regional languages in which aspirants can take the constable (GD) recruitment test includes Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Odia, Urdu, Punjabi, Manipuri and Konkani.
 - ✓ To facilitate this, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Staff Selection Commission (SSC) will sign an addendum to their existing MoU to facilitate the addition of new languages
 - ✓ Staff Selection Commission (SSC) conducts the computer-based recruitment test for constable (GD) posts across CRPF, BSF, ITBP, CISF, SSB and Assam Rifles.
 - ✓ The new norms are expected to encourage more aspirants to appear for the test next year in their mother tongue/regional language.
 - ✓ As per the current system, recruitment for the posts of constable (general duty) in various CAPFs is done by SSC on the basis of a computer-based test in Hindi and English.
- **Government-owned lender to MSMEs, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) - has launched a pilot program — Mission 50K-EV4ECO — to promote the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs)**
- ✓ The mission aims to bring down the capital cost for purchasing electric vehicles (EVs), especially 2- and 3-wheelers, through direct and indirect lending.
 - ✓ Under direct lending, SIDBI will give loans to eligible MSMEs (including aggregators, fleet operators, and EV leasing companies) to purchase EVs and develop charging infrastructure, including battery swapping.
 - ✓ Indirect lending is targeted at non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), including small unrated, focused, and emerging NBFCs actively engaged in EV financing.
 - ✓ This program is the precursor to another scheme, EVOLVE, launched jointly by SIDBI and the World Bank.

INTERNATIONAL

- **International law enforcement agencies - have shut down a dark web marketplace 'Genesis Market' in a multinational crackdown dubbed "Operation Cookie Monster."**
- ✓ Genesis Market is one of the world's largest online marketplaces where cybercriminals can buy stolen identities and passwords
 - ✓ Genesis Market sold the identities of over two million people for as little as \$0.70, allowing hackers to target bank accounts and carry out online fraud
 - ✓ Unlike the so-called strict "dark web" services, Genesis was available on the open web "although obscured from law enforcement behind an invitation-only veil"
 - ✓ "Operation Cookie Monster" was led by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Dutch police and involved 17 countries.

- ✓ The US Treasury had imposed sanctions against Genesis Market, which is based in Russia
- ✓ After the operation, action against criminals took place in countries including Australia, Britain, Canada, the United States and more than 10 countries in Europe.
- ✓ A cookie is a piece of computer data that makes it easier to reopen web pages.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar - virtually inaugurated the Buzi Bridge, which was built by India in Mozambique, recently.**



- ✓ It has been built as part of the 132 km Tica-Buzi-Nova-Sofala Road project in Mozambique
- ✓ The bridge is a practical example of India-Mozambique solidarity and friendship.
- ✓ The External Affairs Minister arrived in the capital of Mozambique on April 13 on a three-day visit and met the President of the African country's Parliament to strengthen bilateral cooperation.
- ✓ His visit to Mozambique from April 13 to 15 is the first-ever official visit by an external affairs minister of India to the country.
- ✓ Besides, the Minister took a ride in a 'Made in India' train from Maputo to Machava in Mozambique during the visit on April 13.
- **India - has been elected to the highest statistical body of the United Nations for a four-year term beginning January 1, 2024.**
- ✓ India won in the UN Statistical Commission election, securing 46 out of 53 votes, ahead of South Korea (23) China (19), and the UAE (15).
- ✓ India was elected by secret ballot while Argentina, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Ukraine, the United Republic of Tanzania and the United States of America were elected by acclamation to the office.
- ✓ India was a member of the Statistical Commission last in 2004 and the country is returning to the UN agency after a gap of two decades.
- ✓ Established in 1947, the United Nations Statistical Commission is the highest body of the global statistical system bringing together the Chief Statisticians from member states from around the world

- ✓ It is the highest decision-making body for international statistical activities, responsible for setting of statistical standards and the development of concepts and methods, including their implementation at the national and international level.
- ✓ The Commission consists of 24 member countries of the United Nations elected by the United Nations Economic and Social Council on the basis of an equitable geographical distribution.
- ✓ Among the member nations, five members are from African States, four from Asia-Pacific States, four from Eastern European States, four from Latin American and Caribbean States and seven members from Western European and other States.
- ✓ The current members from the Asia-Pacific are Japan (2024), Samoa (2024) as well as Kuwait and Republic of Korea, whose terms are ending this year.
- ✓ India was also elected by acclamation as a member of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), an important subsidiary body of the UN organ focused on economic, social and environmental issues.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **The European Space Agency (ESA) - successfully launched the Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (JUICE) on board an Ariane 5 rocket from Kourou, French Guiana on April 14**



- ✓ This is the ESA's first-ever mission to find habitable environments and presence of alien life on the icy moons of Jupiter
- ✓ JUICE will make detailed observations of Jupiter and its three large ocean-bearing moons - Ganymede, Callisto and Europa - with a suite of instruments

- ✓ It will make multiple flybys of Jupiter's satellites Ganymede, Callisto and Europa before orbiting around Ganymede
 - ✓ Ganymede is the only moon with a magnetic field and the biggest moon in the solar system
 - ✓ JUICE is expected to reach the largest planet in the Solar System, Jupiter in 2031
 - ✓ Further, JUICE will also perform flybys of Venus, Earth and the moon to increase its speed and adjust its trajectory.
 - ✓ According to ESA, the JUICE mission cost an estimated \$1.7 billion and is a product of "global" cooperation between 23 countries, 18 academic institutions, and 83 private companies.
- **Japan's Hakuto-R spacecraft - is preparing to make a historic lunar landing attempt on April 25.**
- ✓ The private Japanese lunar lander is currently in orbit around the moon and targeting a landing on April 25
 - ✓ The Hakuto-R spacecraft was launched on December 11, 2022 on board a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.
 - ✓ The primary landing site is Atlas Crater, located at the southeastern outer edge of Mare Frigoris ("Sea of Cold")
 - ✓ If successful, Hakuto-R will be the first privately operated spacecraft to land safely on the moon.
 - ✓ Hakuto-R, operated by Japanese firm ISpace, is the second private lunar mission and also the first ever by the UAE
 - ✓ The spacecraft carries the tiny Rashid rover for the United Arab Emirates' space agency.
 - ✓ The 10-kg Rashid rover, a product of UAE's Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre, is equipped with two high-resolution cameras, a microscopic camera to capture small details and a thermal imaging camera.
 - ✓ It also carries a Langmuir probe, which will study the moon's plasma and aim to explain why the moon dust is so sticky.
 - ✓ With a mission span of one lunar day or 14 earth days, the rover will also study mobility on the moon's surface and how different surfaces interact with lunar particles.
 - ✓ The rover also carries a tiny two-wheeled robot from the Japanese Space Agency Jaxa and Japanese toymaker Tomy, which will be deployed in the Atlas crater.
 - ✓ Apart from the rover, Hakuto-R also carries a music disc featuring the song 'Sorato', by the Japanese rock band Sakanaction.
 - ✓ If successful, the touchdown would make Japan only the fourth country to soft-land on the moon, after the United States, Soviet Union and China.
 - ✓ The alternative landing dates chosen by the ESA are April 26, May 1 and May 3.
 - ✓ The first private mission by Israel's Beresheet lander operated by Space IL was not completely successful, after losing communication while landing on April 11, 2019.

- **Isro - is planning the launch of PSLV-C55 mission next week and the lift-off is likely on April 22.**
- ✓ Unlike previous launches, this launch is unique as integration of different stages of the rocket has been done in an innovative way to help reduce time in the assembly process.
- ✓ PSLV-C55 is also the first rocket to be integrated at the new PSLV Integration Facility (PIF) and is expected to put a Singaporean satellite into space.
- ✓ As part of the new approach, the first and second stages of the PSLV-C55 mission will be integrated at the PIF centre and will be transferred to the first launchpad via the new mobile launch pedestal (MLP).
- ✓ The new approach will allow the partial integration of a PSLV vehicle even if the first launchpad has been preoccupied with any other launch
- ✓ Thus, the new approach will help increase the launch frequency and allow the space agency to launch more missions in less time.

DEFENCE

- **A contingent of the Indian Air Force (IAF) – has left for France to participate in ‘Exercise Orion 2023’ to be held at Mont-de-Marsan, an air force base of the French Air and Space Force (FASF)**



- ✓ The exercise will be conducted from April 17 - May 5, 2023
- ✓ Four Indian Air Force's Rafale fighter aircraft will be participating for the first time in an overseas exercise.
 - ✓ The newly inducted Rafale combat jets are deployed in Haryana's Ambala and West Bengal's Hasimara air bases.
- ✓ Apart from the Rafales, two C-17 Globemaster III strategic airlifters, two IL-78 mid-air refuellers and 165 personnel will take part in the multi-nation air combat exercise in France
- ✓ The Orion exercise is one of the largest-ever wargames hosted by France, and also involves land and sea drills with thousands of Nato troops
- ✓ The exercise will witness the participation of the air forces of the US, United Kingdom, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain and Netherlands.
- ✓ The first leg of the Orion 2023 wargames started on February 23 and culminated on March 11

- ✓ This is the fourth and final phase of exercise which would involve over 12,000 troops, including NATO allies.
- ✓ The exercise is meant to boost military cooperation and interoperability among participating nations.
- **The Philippines and the United States - have launched their largest-ever joint military exercises recently on April 11**



- ✓ A total of around 18,000 troops are taking part in the annual exercises dubbed Balikatan, or "shoulder to shoulder" in Filipino
- ✓ This is the first time the exercise will include a live-fire drill in the South China Sea, which Beijing claims almost entirely.
- ✓ About 12,200 American, 5,400 Filipino and just over 100 Australian soldiers will participate in the two weeks of Balikatan exercises — about twice as many as last year.
- ✓ The Americans will also use their Patriot missiles, considered one of the best air-defense systems in the world, and the HIMARS precision rocket system, which has helped Ukrainian forces fighting the Russian invaders.
- ✓ The exercise will run up to April 28, 2023
- ✓ In recent months, Manila and Washington have agreed to restart joint maritime patrols in the South China Sea and signed a deal to expand the U.S. forces' presence in the Philippines
- ✓ As per the deal, U.S. troops will be allowed to use an additional four Philippine military bases, including a naval base near Taiwan

SPORTS

- **Indian golf - will have its own full-fledged national squad in gentlemen, ladies and junior boys and girls categories.**
- ✓ These teams will participate across all major international amateur competitions, including the prestigious World Team event, British Championships and Queen Sirikit Cup, among others.

- ✓ India was without its national squads since 2016 owing to Indian Golf Union's (IGU) de-recognition by the sports ministry and its failure to hold the annual general meeting (AGM).
- ✓ The IGU is the governing body of the sport in the country
- ✓ The federation held its AGM and elections in December 2022 and is now headed by Brijinder Singh as its president.
- ✓ The IGU will send the national squad members to global competitions without holding trials
- ✓ The trials will only be conducted to select the Indian golf contingent for the Asian Games and CWG, as mandated by the ministry.
- ✓ The sport will make its debut at the CWG in 2026 in Victoria, Australia.
- ✓ The country will have its first-ever high-performance centre in golf, which will come up at a cost of Rs 3-4 crore in one of the Indian cities this year and house the national team members.
- ✓ Further, Chandigarh-based National Golf Academy of India (NGAI) will be re-structured and world-class regional NGAs will be established across four zones.

