

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – MAY 28, 2023

STATES

- **Uttar Pradesh - has surpassed Maharashtra in sugar production in the current sugar season**
- ✓ The total sugar produced by Uttar Pradesh in sugar season 2022-2023 is 107.29 lakh tonnes, as compared to 105.30 lakh tonnes by Maharashtra.
- ✓ The area under sugarcane cultivation in Uttar Pradesh is 28.53 lakh hectare (maximum in India) as compared to 14.87 lakh hectare in Maharashtra.
- ✓ The sugarcane production in UP has been 2,348 lakh tonnes, while in Maharashtra it was 1,413 lakh tonnes
- ✓ A total of 210 sugar mills operated in Maharashtra as compared to 118 in Uttar Pradesh
- ✓ The sugarcane crushing season runs from October to June.

- **The government of Rajasthan - signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the city of Aarhus, Denmark recently on May 19**
- ✓ The MoU was signed for an exchange programme named 'Cooperation in the field of Sustainable Urban Water Sector Development'.



- ✓ Under this project, Rajasthan and Denmark will cooperate with each other for quality in urban drinking water sector, reduction in non-revenue water (sewage) by increasing efficiency of distribution mechanism, coordinated management of water sources, ground water aquifer mapping, planning and recycling of wastewater management, green solutions for rejuvenation of rivers etc.
- ✓ This MoU will be effective till 2030.
- **Goa and Uttarakhand - signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to promote tourism between the states as part of the Centre's 'Dekho Apna Desh' initiative.**



- ✓ The MoU was signed in Dehradun, the capital of Uttarakhand on May 23
- ✓ This MoU is a first of its kind in India, where two states are collaborating to promote the Prime Minister's vision of Dekho Apna Desh initiative
- ✓ The MoU is aimed at promoting bilateral cooperation in the travel and tourism sector and facilitating travel between the states to increase the number of tourists visiting Goa and Uttarakhand respectively
- ✓ Under the MoU, both states will benefit from direct flight connectivity between Uttarakhand and Goa, wherein the travel time is reduced from 7 hours to 2.5 hours, making it easier for tourists to travel between the two states.
- ✓ The MoU will pave the way for cultural exchange between the two states, showcasing local cuisines, folk art, and handicrafts through various cultural exchange programs, roadshows, festivals, and events.
- ✓ The 'Dekho Apna Desh' initiative aims to encourage people to witness and experience the rich heritage and vivid culture of India.

NATIONAL

- **The eighth governing council meeting of Niti Aayog - was held in New Delhi on May 27**
- ✓ It was presided over by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the Chairman of Niti Aayog.

- ✓ Themed on 'Viksit Bharat @2047: Role of Team India', the meeting was held at the new Convention Centre in the national capital's Pragati Maidan.



- ✓ Addressing the Governing Council meeting the Prime Minister emphasised the importance of evolving a common vision to achieve a Vikasit Bharat@2047.
- ✓ He highlighted that Niti Aayog provides a platform for equal partnership between the Centre and States, thus strengthening cooperative and competitive federalism in the country.
- ✓ The Prime Minister reiterated that the success of the Aspirational Districts Programme, inspired Niti Aayog to launch the Aspirational Blocks Programme
 - ✓ The Aspirational Blocks Programme aims to uplift living standards of citizens in 500 backward blocks across country and bring them at par with State averages
- ✓ Further, the PM said that Gati Shakti with nearly one thousand six hundred layers of data ensures evidence-based policy-making in the infrastructure sector
- ✓ He stressed on the need for States and Centre to promote Shree Anna in the International Year of Millets and work towards water conservation through the Amrit Sarovar programme.
- ✓ Talking about women development, the PM highlighted the significance of women-led development and also spoke about ending the menace of Tuberculosis by 2025.
- ✓ The Prime Minister also spoke about the importance of skilling people with a view to meet global requirements, supporting MSMEs, developing the tourism potential of the country, reducing compliances at the State level including decriminalisation of minor offences, creation of Ekta Malls
- ✓ Chief Ministers of several States participated in the council meeting that was attended by Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
- ✓ Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel, Andhra Pradesh chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren, Arunachal

Pradesh chief minister Pema Khandu, Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde were seen at the meeting.

- ✓ Eight key topics were discussed during the daylong meeting including Viksit Bharat@2047, thrust on MSMEs, infrastructure and investments, minimising compliances, women empowerment, health and nutrition, skill development, and Gati Shakti for area development and social infrastructure.
 - ✓ As a preparatory prelude to the 8th Governing Council Meeting, the second Chief Secretaries Conference was held in January 2023, where these themes were extensively discussed.
 - ✓ The 11 states whose CMs skipped the meeting were Punjab, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Delhi, Telangana, Odisha, West Bengal, Kerala, Manipur and Rajasthan.
 - ✓ Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, who is on a visit to Japan and Singapore, was not present at the meeting.
 - ✓ The Governing Council, the apex body of Niti Aayog, includes all chief ministers, lieutenant governors of Union Territories and several Union ministers.
 - ✓ Generally, the full council meeting happens every year and last year, it was held under the chairmanship of PM Modi on August 7.
 - ✓ The first meeting of the council took place on February 8, 2015, while the council meeting was not convened in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- **The 'Yoga Mahotsav' - witnessed a massive participation of 50,000 people at the NCC Parade Ground in Secunderabad on May 27**



- ✓ The event was organized by the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), under the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India
- ✓ It was held to commemorate 25 days to the International Day of Yoga, which is going to be celebrated at Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh on 21 June, 2023
- ✓ Governor of Telangana, Dr Tamilsai Soundararajan graced the occasion as the chief guest
- ✓ Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways and Ayush, Sarbananda Sonowal; the Union Minister of Culture, Tourism & DoNER, G Kishan Reddy; Union Minister

of State for Women & Child Development and Ayush, Dr Munjpara Mahendrabhai participated in the event

- **The Ministry of Education and PARAKH - the national assessment centre, organised the first national-level workshop on assessment with the states and union territories (UTs) in New Delhi**



- ✓ The workshop focused on school assessment, examination practices and equality between educational boards nationwide.
 - ✓ It discussed the rote learning culture in India and emphasised designing standardised question papers, balancing the weightage given to formative and summative assessments and reducing the burden associated with higher education institutions.
 - ✓ Along with this, the workshop also focused on the analysis of the results of secondary and higher secondary examinations.
 - ✓ The workshop was attended by officials from the Ministry of Education, CBSE, NCERT, NIOS, NCVET and NCTE, along with state education secretaries, state project directors schools, SCERT, and officials from State Examination Boards across India
 - ✓ Parakh is an organisation under the National Council of Research and Training (NCERT).
 - ✓ It aims to bring school boards from different states and UT together on a common platform.
 - ✓ In India, there are 60 educational boards in all the states and UT.
- **Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan - has announced the discontinuation of two Hindi awards – ‘Shiksha Puraskar’ and ‘Hinditar Bhashi Hindi Lekhak Puraskar’**
 - ✓ ‘Shiksha Puraskar’ was launched by the Central government in 1992 under which five awards worth Rs. 1 lakh were given every year.
 - ✓ It was granted to encourage writers who came up with original, creative pieces in Hindi.

- ✓ 'Hinditar Bhashi Hindi Lekhak Puraskar' was granted to writers belonging to non-Hindi speaking areas to promote Hindi writing.
- ✓ 'Hinditar Bhashi Hindi Lekhak' carried a cash prize of Rs. 50,000 each year.
- **Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs - has organized a two-day National Workshop on the National e-Vidhan Application, NeVA in New Delhi recently on May 24-25.**



- ✓ The focus of this workshop is to encourage all State and UT Legislatures to move towards NeVA platform and bring in transparency, accountability and responsiveness in their conduct of House business.
- ✓ National e-Vidhan Application is one of the 44 Mission Mode Projects under the "Digital India Programme" of Union Government which aims to make the functioning of all the State Legislatures paperless by transforming them into 'Digital House'.
- ✓ Till now, 21 State legislatures have signed Memorandum of Understanding for implementation of NeVA.
- ✓ The project has been sanctioned for 17 Legislatures and funds have been released to them for implementation of the project.
- ✓ Among them, nine Legislatures have already become fully digital and are Live on NeVA platform.
- **Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal - has announced that the Centre will provide 30% financial support for promotion of Green Shipping.**
- ✓ Addressing the second Chintan Shibir held at Munnar in Kerala recently on May 22, Sonowal said Green Hydrogen hubs will be developed at the Deendayal Port at Kandla and Chidambaranar Port at Tuticorin.
- ✓ Further, the Minister said two tugs each will be procured for the Jawaharlal Nehru, VO Chidambaranar, Paradip, and Deendayal ports under the Green Tug Transition programme.

- ✓ The Minister also said a single window portal will be designed to facilitate river and sea cruise bookings.
 - ✓ According to the Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and the Tuticorin ports will become smart ports by next year.
 - ✓ Ministers of State Shripad Y Naik, Shantanu Thakur and senior officials from the Ministry participated in the two-day event.
- **AI supercomputer 'AIRAWAT' - has secured the 75th position in the prestigious Top 500 Global Supercomputing List**



- ✓ The announcement was made during the 61st edition of the International Supercomputing Conference (ISC 2023) held in Germany
- ✓ The installation of 'AIRAWAT' at C-DAC Pune is part of the 'National Program on AI' initiated by the Government of India.
- ✓ Supercomputers aggregate the computational power of multiple servers or compute devices for processing huge amounts of data and performing complex calculations.

INTERNATIONAL

- **South Korea – has recently launched a commercial-grade satellite using a domestically produced space rocket**



- ✓ The Nuri rocket lifted off from Naro Space Center on the southern coast of South Korea on May 25
- ✓ Among eight satellites aboard the rocket, the main commercial-grade satellite made contact with a base station in Antarctica after successfully separating from the space vehicle
- ✓ The launch placed South Korea among the top seven countries that have put domestically produced satellites into orbit with their domestically built space launch vehicles.
- ✓ The three-stage KSLV-II Nuri is the country's first domestically built space launch vehicle using only South Korean rocket technology, and three more flights are expected by 2027.

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **Defence minister Rajnath Singh - is leaving for a three-day visit to Nigeria to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the country's new president**
- ✓ Singh will attend the swearing-in ceremony of President-elect Bola Ahmed Tinubu at Eagle Square in Abuja on May 29.
- ✓ This will be the first-ever visit by an Indian defence minister to the west African nation
- ✓ He will also meet the outgoing Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari during a reception hosted by him on May 28.
- ✓ With Nigeria being home to an estimated 50,000 members of the Indian community, Singh is also scheduled to address a diaspora event at Abuja during the visit.
- ✓ The visit comes soon after Army chief General Manoj Pande visited Egypt earlier this month.
- ✓ The Special Forces of India and Egypt had conducted their first-ever joint Army exercise called 'Cyclone-1' at Jaisalmer in Rajasthan in January.

- **India - presented 20 Broad Gauge locomotives to Bangladesh recently on May 23**



- ✓ The diesel loco engines en route to Dhaka were flagged off by Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw through a video conference.
 - ✓ The gift marked the fulfillment of the promise made to Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by the Indian government in 2019.
 - ✓ These engines, having 3300 HP each, will help meet the rising passenger and freight train operations between India and Bangladesh
 - ✓ In all, the Indian government has given a total of 30 railway engines to Bangladesh as a gift so far.
 - ✓ According to government, some 100 cargo trains and 2.66 million tonnes of freight were transported from India via trains to parts of Bangladesh last financial year
 - ✓ Kolkata-Khulna Bandhan Express, Kolkata-Dhaka Maitree Express, and New Jalpaiguri-Dhaka Mitali Express are the three passenger trains running between India and Bangladesh
- **India and Australia - signed a migration partnership agreement aimed at making it easier for students, academics and professionals to live, study and work in each other's countries.**



- ✓ The deal was signed recently during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Australia on May 24
- ✓ This was the sixth meeting between the two leaders since Albanese took office in May last year.
- ✓ Albanese announced the establishment of a new Australian consulate in Bengaluru to connect Australian businesses to India's digital and innovation ecosystem, and welcomed India's plans to set up a consulate in Brisbane.
- ✓ The consulate in Bengaluru will be Australia's fifth diplomatic mission in India.
- ✓ Australia was the last leg of PM's three-nation tour that also took him to Japan, where he joined outreach sessions of the G7 Summit, and to Papua New Guinea for a summit with leaders of 14 Pacific Island states.

CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **Minister of Health and Family Welfare Mansukh Mandaviya - launched the National Medical Device Policy 2023 at an annual conference on Indian pharmaceuticals and medical devices in Delhi on May 26**



- ✓ During the event, the Minister also launched the Export Promotion Council for Medical Devices and the Scheme for Assistance to Medical Devices Clusters for Common Facilities (AMD-CF) and released six reports on pharmaceuticals and medical devices.
 - ✓ This new scheme aims to establish and strengthen common infrastructure facilities in the medical devices clusters and improve testing facilities for medical devices.
- ✓ The Cabinet approved the National Medical Device Policy 2023 on April 26
- ✓ The conference was co-hosted by the Department of Pharmaceuticals and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)

PERSONALITIES

- **American Space Agency Nasa – has named four volunteers who will be spending the next one year in a Martian habitat in Houston, Texas**
- ✓ For Nasa, these long-term experiments make it possible to evaluate the behaviour of a crew in an isolated and confined environment, ahead of a real Mars mission in future.



- ✓ At the end of June, the carefully chosen volunteers will start participating in an exercise simulating long stay on the Red Planet.
- ✓ Participants will face equipment failures and water limitations during the period of stay.

- ✓ Their communications with the outside world will suffer from the delays that exist between Earth and Mars — up to 20 minutes one-way, depending on the planets' positions — and 40 minutes two ways.
- ✓ The habitat, named Mars Dune Alpha, is a 3D printed 1,700 square-foot facility, complete with bedrooms, a gym, common areas, and a vertical farm to grow food.
- ✓ This mission is the first of a series of three planned by Nasa, grouped under the title CHAPEA (Crew Health and Performance Exploration Analog).

DEFENCE

- **The sea phase of second edition of bilateral exercise 'Al Mohed Al Hindi 23', between Indian Navy and Royal Saudi Naval Force (RSNF) - was held from May 23 to 25 off Al Jubail, Saudi Arabia.**



- ✓ INS Tarkash, INS Subhadra and Dornier Maritime Patrol aircraft (MPA) participated in the exercise from the Indian side.
 - ✓ The RSNF was represented by HMS Badr and Abdul Aziz, MH 60R helo and UAV.
 - ✓ The three-day exercise at sea witnessed a wide spectrum of maritime operations exhibiting high degree of professionalism, interoperability and exchange of best practices between the two navies
 - ✓ This is the second such exercise between the two countries, following the first in August 2021
 - ✓ The decision to hold joint naval exercises was taken during the Riyadh Summit held in 2019, which marked a turning point in India-Saudi Arabia relations.
 - ✓ The summit was attended by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman
 - ✓ In 2021, India and Saudi Arabia signed an agreement to set up a \$15 billion oil refinery and petrochemicals complex in India's Maharashtra state
- **The Russian-origin INS Sindhuratna diesel-electric submarines - have successfully returned to Mumbai after undergoing a major upgrade in Russia.**



- ✓ The Navy's Kilo-class submarine underwent a comprehensive refit for 97 days at the Naval Dockyard in Russia
- ✓ INS Sindhuratna, a Sindhughosh class submarine, faced a major accident in February 2014, resulting in the death of two officers.
- ✓ The submarine had been scheduled for a medium refit-cum-life extension upgrade at Severodvinsk long before the Russia-Ukraine war started

BUSINESS/ECONOMY

- **Canara Bank - emerged as the largest buyer among the state-owned lenders in 2022-23**



- ✓ It had made total purchases of Rs 592.82 crore from the government-owned GeM portal
- ✓ Punjab National Bank (Rs 164.57 crore) was the second largest, followed by Indian Overseas Bank (Rs 159.82 crore), State Bank of India (Rs 158.22 crore) and Indian Bank (Rs 111.59 crore)
- ✓ Other banks making significant purchases include Bank of India (Rs 63.81 crore), Bank of Baroda (Rs 48.63 crore), Union Bank of India (Rs 37.03 crore), Bank of Maharashtra (Rs 10.26 crore), Punjab and Sind Bank (Rs 9.98 crore), UCO Bank (Rs 5.30 crore) and Central Bank of India (Rs 4.54 crore)

- ✓ The GeM portal was launched on August 9, 2016, for online purchasing of goods and services by all the central government ministries and departments.
- ✓ GeM has over 63,000 government buyer organisations and over 62 lakh sellers and service providers offering a wide range of products and services.
- **State-owned Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) - has emerged as the top performer among public sector lenders in terms of loan and deposit growth in percentage terms during 2022-23.**



- ✓ The Pune-headquartered lender also recorded highest growth in profitability, growing almost 126% to Rs 2,602 crore during the year.
- ✓ Significantly, all the 12 public sector banks together recorded 57% jump in net profit to reach 1 trillion mark and stood at Rs 1,04,649 crore in FY23
- ✓ With regard to deposit growth, BoM witnessed 15.7% rise and mobilised Rs 2,34,083 crore at the end of March 2023.
- ✓ Bank of Baroda was second with 13% growth in deposits (Rs 10,47,375 crore) while Punjab National Bank recorded 11.26% increase at Rs 12,51,708 crore, according to the data on yearly performance of public sector banks (PSBs).
- ✓ However, in absolute terms, aggregate loans of the country's biggest lender SBI were nearly 16 times higher at Rs 27,76,802 crore.
- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) - has granted approval for the voluntary Scheme of Amalgamation of Maratha Sahakari Bank with The Cosmos Co-operative Bank.**
- ✓ The merger is set to take effect from May 29, 2023, as announced by the RBI.
- ✓ Maratha Sahakari Bank has seven branches in Mumbai and was established in 1946
- ✓ The merger has been approved under the authority of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

APPOINTMENTS

- **The Centre - has appointed Justice SV Gangapurwala as the Chief Justice of Madras High Court.**



- ✓ Justice Gangapurwala is currently the Acting Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court.
- ✓ President Droupadi Murmu, exercising her powers conferred to her by Clause (1) of Article 217 of the Constitution of India 1950, has appointed Justice Gangapurwala as the Chief Justice
- ✓ Governor R N Ravi will administer the oath of office to the Chief Justice-designate at the Raj Bhavan at 10am on May 28.
- ✓ The Supreme Court Collegium had recommended the appointment of Justice Gangapurwala to the Madras High Court on April 19, 2023
- ✓ The position of Chief Justice of Madras High Court was left vacant after the superannuation of Justice Munishwar Nath Bhandari on September 12, 2022.
- ✓ Thereafter, Justice Duraiswamy, Justice T Raja and presently Justice S Vaidyanathan have been serving as the Acting Chief Justice.
- ✓ In December 2022, Justice Gangapurwala was appointed as the Acting Justice of the Bombay High Court after the then Chief Justice Dipankar Datta was elevated as Judge of the Supreme Court
- ✓ Born on May 24, 1962, Justice Gangapurwala will have a tenure of about one year once he assumes office.
- ✓ Justice Gangapurwala commenced his practice as a lawyer in 1985 and joined the chambers of advocate S N Loya, practised in trial court, high court and Debt Recovery Tribunal.
- ✓ He was an advocate for financial institutions such as Central Bank of India, Bombay Mercantile Cooperative Bank, Jalgaon Janata Sahakari Bank and other corporate bodies as well as Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University.
- ✓ Justice Gangapurwala represented the government before Justice Mane Commission on the riots in Maharashtra in 1999.
- ✓ He was part-time lecturer in MP Law College since 1991, till the date of his elevation as additional judge of Bombay high court on March 13, 2010.