

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEBRUARY 17, 2022

### NATIONAL

- **The central government - has mandated the use of helmets for children riding pillion on two wheelers from February 15, 2023**
- ✓ On February 16, the Union transport ministry notified that children between the ages of 9 months and 4 years, riding pillion on two-wheelers will have to wear a crash helmet and a safety harness attached to the rider
  - ✓ Safety harness is an adjustable vest to be worn by the child, with a pair of straps attached to the vest and forming shoulder loops to be worn by the driver
  - ✓ The Bureau of Indian Standards has been asked to study and specify standards for the safety harnesses and crash helmets for children
  - ✓ The safety harness for children should be lightweight, adjustable, waterproof and durable, the ministry recommended
  - ✓ The harness will be built using heavy nylon or multifilament nylon material with high density foam and can hold weight of up to 30 kg.
- ✓ The speed limit for two-wheelers with children on them will have to be a maximum of 40km per hour, as per the new rules notified by the ministry
- ✓ Children above four years are already covered under the Motor Vehicles Act.
- ✓ In 2016, the Centre amended the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989 to make it mandatory for children above 4 years to wear helmets while travelling on two-wheelers
- ✓ After seeking comments from the public since October last year, the ministry issued a final notification amending the Central Motor Vehicles Act on February 15, 2022
- ✓ However, the Ministry stated that these rules will come into effect after one year from the date of issuing the notification, which means they will be implemented from February 15, 2023
- ✓ Any violation of the rules will carry a fine of ₹1,000 and a suspension of driver's licence for three months

## PERSONALITIES

- **A US woman - is said to have become the third person in the world, and first woman, to be cured of HIV after undergoing stem-cell transplant**
- ✓ The woman, a leukaemia patient, received a stem cell transplant from another person with natural resistance to the Aids-causing virus
- ✓ The transplant happened as part of her ongoing cancer treatment.
- ✓ In the case of the woman, an umbilical cord blood transplant was done which went in her favour
- ✓ According to the researchers, the woman has had no detectable levels of HIV for 14 months despite cessation of antiretroviral therapy (ART).
- ✓ The potential of stem cell transplants was demonstrated in 2007 when Timothy Ray Brown became the first person to be “cured” of HIV
- ✓ Since then, the feat has been repeated only twice with Adam Castillejo, and now the New York patient
- ✓ Stem cells have the unique ability to develop into specialised cell types in the body.

## DEFENCE

- **Ministry of Defence – to host the 12th edition of biennial defence exhibition Def Expo 2022 from 10th to 13th March 2022 at Gandhinagar, Gujarat**



- ✓ More than 900 defence firms and 55 countries have confirmed their participation in Asia's largest defence exhibition, DefExpo 2022
- ✓ The focus of India's flagship defence exhibition is on projecting the country as an emerging defence manufacturing hub
- ✓ Theme for Defexpo 2022 is “India-The Emerging Defence Manufacturing Hub”.
- ✓ In the run up to the Defexpo, a series of 8 webinars are being conducted between January 20, 2022 and February 24, 2022 with participation from leading personalities and eminent speakers
- ✓ A 1,000-drone display is expected to be one of the highlights of the exhibition
- ✓ This will be the second time such a show is being organised in the country.
- ✓ It was first organised at the Beating Retreat in Delhi on January 29.

- ✓ The drone show will be organised by Botlab Dynamics, a start-up supported by the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and the department of science and technology (DST).
- ✓ Only the US, Russia and China have the capability to conduct a show with 1,000 drones
- ✓ The US pavilion will be the largest among the global participants, while Indian firms that have taken maximum space are the Adani and Tata groups
- ✓ Along with the DefExpo, the second India-Africa Defence Dialogue will also be held.
- ✓ For the dialogue this year, invites have been extended to 52 countries.
- ✓ DefExpo was traditionally held in Delhi until 2014 after which it has seen new venues --- Goa (2016), Chennai (2018) and Lucknow (2020).
- ✓ Around 200 Memorandum of Undertakings (MoUs) were signed between various manufacturers during the Lucknow edition of the Defence Expo in 2020

## APPOINTMENTS

- **Former Navy vice chief G Ashok Kumar - has been appointed as the first National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC) in the National Security Council Secretariat**



- ✓ G Ashok Kumar was commissioned into the executive branch of the Indian Navy on July 1, 1982.
- ✓ The national maritime security coordinator is mandated to ensure cohesion among various key stakeholders with an overall objective to strengthen the country's maritime security.
- ✓ The NMSC works in coordination with the National Security Council Secretariat headed by NSA Ajit Doval.
- ✓ The NMSC is tasked to coordinate among the Indian Navy, the Coast Guard, security agencies involved in coastal and maritime security and 13 coastal states and Union Territories.

- ✓ The Cabinet Committee on Security, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, gave its nod to the creation of the post of NMSC last November.
- ✓ Kumar, a specialist in navigation and direction, will be the principal adviser to the government on maritime security
- ✓ In January 2019, Kumar took over as the 35th Vice Chief of the Indian Navy.
- ✓ He is an alumnus of Sainik School, Amaravathi Nagar in Tamil Nadu and National Defence Academy, Khadakvasla, Pune.
- ✓ After completing his specialisation in Navigation and Direction at Kochi in 1989, Kumar served as the Navigating Officer of Indian Naval ships, including Beas, Nilgiri, Ranvir and Vikrant.
- ✓ His other sea tenures include Commanding Officer of INS Kulish and Ranvir and Executive Officer onboard INS Brahmaputra.
- ✓ Other important positions served by Kumar include Staff Officer (Ops/ND) at the Indian Naval Work-up team, Head of the Training Team (Navy) at Defence Services Staff College, Wellington and as Defence Advisor at the High Commission of India in Singapore and the Chief Staff Officer (Operations) of the Western Naval Command.
- ✓ Further, on promotion to Flag rank, Kumar held the important assignments of Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST), Chief of Staff (COS) of Southern Naval Command and Flag Officer Maharashtra and Gujarat (FOMAG).
- ✓ In the rank of Vice-Admiral, Kumar served as the Commandant of the National Defence Academy and the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff.
- ✓ Kumar is a graduate of Defence Services Staff College, Wellington and has attended the Army Higher Command Course at Mhow as well as the Expeditionary Operations Course at Quantico, Virginia, USA.
- ✓ The former Flag Officer is an awardee of the Param Vishisht Seva Medal (PVSM), Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) and Vishisht Seva Medal (VSM).
- ✓ India has a 7,516.6 km coastline, which includes the mainland, Lakshadweep Islands, and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands and over two million km of exclusive economic zone (EEZ).
- ✓ Vice Admiral Kumar retired from service in July last year.

