

EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEBRUARY 26, 2022

NATIONAL

- **Former group operating officer (GOO) of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) Anand Subramanian - has been arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in connection with alleged irregularities and manipulation in National Stock Exchange**
- ✓ He was arrested after CBI expanded its probe into a co-location scam running into thousands of crore.
- ✓ CBI had earlier questioned Subramanian for three days ending the interrogation on February 21



- ✓ It has already questioned former MD-CEO Chitra Ramkrishna and former CEO Ravi Narain
- ✓ Chitra Ramkrishna was MD and CEO of NSE from April 2013 to December 2016, while Narain held that post from April 1994 till March 2013.
- ✓ Chitra Ramkrishna is under investigation for allegedly sharing confidential information with a mysterious "yogi" in the Himalayas, who also influenced her decisions.

- ✓ One of those decisions was Anand Subramanian's appointment and "frequent, arbitrary and disproportionate" hikes in his salary without any evidence of a performance evaluation
 - ✓ SEBI has already fined Ramkrishna ₹ 3 crore, and ₹ 2 crore each on NSE, Subramanian, former NSE MD and CEO Ravi Narain
 - ✓ Anand Subramanian was first appointed as Chief Strategic Adviser in the NSE in 2013 and then promoted as Group Operating Officer in 2015 by then Managing Director Chitra Ramkrishna at a hefty pay cheque of Rs 4.21 crore.
 - ✓ In 2016, he left the National Stock Exchange after allegations of irregularities surfaced.
 - ✓ The 2018 case being probed by the CBI relates to the allegations of illegal gains made by passing on internal exchange information to a third party.
 - ✓ In this regard, the CBI had booked Sanjay Gupta, owner and promoter of Delhi-based OPG Securities Private Ltd, and others in the case
 - ✓ A technical advisory committee report by the Sebi found OPG Securities had consistently logged in first on selected servers on most trading days in 2010-2014 and also had access to servers that had better hardware
 - ✓ The allegations of unfair access were first made by a whistleblower in January 2015
- **The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) - has tied up with Isha Foundation of Sadhguru for creating awareness and outreach on sustainable food and nutritional security in the country.**



- ✓ In this regard, both organisations had signed a memorandum of understanding
- ✓ The MoU seeks to utilise the technical and global expertise of WFP on addressing hunger and Isha Outreach's large public engagement discourses led by spiritual guru and founder of the foundation, Sadhguru.

- ✓ On the occasion of signing the MoU, Sadhguru held a detailed conversation with the WFP’s representatives and other stakeholders on ‘One People. One Planet. One Solution – Need of the Hour’.
 - ✓ During his visit to New Delhi, Sadhguru also met agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar and Niti Aayog member Ramesh Chand over the issue of sustainable agriculture practices and saving the soil.
 - ✓ The MoU on sustainable food and nutritional security in India was signed between WFP representative and country director Bishow Parajuli and director Isha Outreach, Moumita Sen Sarma recently on February 21, 2022
 - ✓ Earlier, the UN World Food Programme was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2020 for its work on addressing hunger
- **The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) – has released the draft data policy titled as, “Draft India Data Accessibility & Use Policy, 2022” for public consultations and feedback**
- ✓ This policy is seen as an upgrade to the National Data Sharing and Accessibility Policy (NDSAP) and the Open Government Data Platform India.

THE FINE PRINT

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stakeholders like start-ups, enterprises, individuals and researchers will be able to access enriched data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ India Data Council will oversee metadata standards, comprise the India Data Office and data officers of five other government departments |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pricing of datasets will be done by the respective government departments in a transparent manner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Every Ministry/ Department shall have data management units headed by chief data officers |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draft policy says guidelines will be framed to decide how long datasets can be held by the government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Every Ministry/ Department shall have data management units headed by chief data officers |

- ✓ The draft policy released on February 21 will be open for public inputs to help improve data access, quality, and utilisation in the country till March 18
- ✓ The policy states that all data collected, maintained, and generated, by every government ministry and agency shall be open and shareable.

- ✓ According to the policy document, all central and state government bodies will be required to share data with one another in order to develop a shared “searchable database.”
 - ✓ The draft data policy considers ‘monetising’ some data by classifying it as “National Resources” rather than “Privacy.”
 - ✓ The policy seeks to allow different ministries and departments to share all data collected, generated, and stored (barring certain exceptions) with companies, including start-ups, and individual researchers
 - ✓ The current policy excludes the private sector from any required data-sharing agreements with the government.
 - ✓ A regulatory authority, called the Indian Data Council (IDC), will be set up whose tasks will include defining frameworks for defining high-value datasets, finalising data standards and metadata standards.
 - ✓ An agency by name India Data Office (IDO) would oversee implementation and enforcement.
 - ✓ The IDC will comprise the IDO and data officers of five government departments
 - ✓ The nomination of departments and state governments in the IDC will be by rotation with a tenure of two years for one department.
 - ✓ The IDO will be constituted by the Ministry of Electronic and Information Technology (MeitY) to streamline and consolidate data access and sharing public data repositories across the government and other stakeholders.
 - ✓ Each central ministry or department will develop and publish its own metadata and data standards.
 - ✓ The term ‘data’ could include every non-personal detail the government holds of the public, such as driving licence, car or home registration, ration card details, etc
 - ✓ The acquiring companies, departments or individuals would be mandated to cite the original source of data.
 - ✓ The draft policy states that minimally processed datasets would be available free of cost
 - ✓ In March 2019, the government had announced a ‘bulk data sharing policy’ to monetise data gathered from citizens’ vehicle registration certificates and driving licences.
- **Union Minister for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Giriraj Singh - launched Rural Connectivity GIS Data in Public Domain recently on February 22 at New Delhi.**
- ✓ This includes data for over 8 lakh rural facilities, 10 lakh habitations and 25 lakh kilometre of rural roads
 - ✓ The data has been collected & digitised using GIS platform developed for Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. (PMGSY)
 - ✓ Union Minister of State for Rural Development Fagga Singh Kulaste and Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti, were also present on the occasion.



- ✓ The data is released under Government of India's Open Data License and is available free of cost for public consumption
- ✓ In this regard, National Rural Infrastructure Development Agency (NRIDA), the nodal implementation agency of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana has also signed MoU with 3 renowned GIS Firms - ESRI India, MapmyIndia, DataMeet
- ✓ The agency NRIDA also collaborates with Gati Shakti for releasing Rural Connectivity GIS Data in Public Domain.
- ✓ The objective of the collaboration is to exchange the data for better planning and implementation of both Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana and GatiShakti.
- ✓ Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) was launched in the year 2000, with an objective to provide all-weather road connectivity to eligible unconnected habitations throughout the country
- ✓ Since inception, 7.83 lakh km roads have been sanctioned and 6.90 lakh km has been constructed with an expenditure of Rs. 2.69 lakh crore, according to the Ministry of Rural Development.
- ✓ Gati Shakti is a national master plan and digital platform to plan and execute infrastructure projects in India to reduce logistics costs and enhance infrastructure.
- ✓ NRIDA is collaborating with Gati Shakti with an objective to exchange the data for the better planning and implementation of both the schemes.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Pakistan – has introduced new legislation to clamp down on "fake news" on social media platforms**
- ✓ President Arif Alvi approved an ordinance to amend the country's Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA)
- ✓ The presidential ordinance, called the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Ordinance 2022, increases jail terms for defamation of people or institutions from 3 to 5 years and makes it as a non-bailable offence
- ✓ Spreading "fake news" will be a nonbailable offense with up to six months' imprisonment, as per the new law

- ✓ The new law also allows anyone to file a complaint against a social media post, not just the aggrieved person or institution
- ✓ It also stipulates that courts will have to expedite trials in six months and submit monthly progress reports of any pending trial to the high court concerned stating the reasons for the delay
- ✓ As per the rules, social media companies would be required to set up offices in Pakistan within three months and appoint a compliance officer and grievance officer to address complaints within seven working days
- ✓ The rules would apply to all social media platforms including Facebook and Twitter
- ✓ The criminal defamation law was originally enacted in 2016 by former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government

INDIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES

- **Namibia – has agreed in principle to give 35-40 cheetahs for translocation to India**
- ✓ This was announced by the officials who returned from Namibia with respect to the ambitious project to reintroduce cheetahs into the Indian wilderness



- ✓ A five-member delegation from the Union environment ministry, Madhya Pradesh — where the first cheetahs are scheduled to be relocated — and Wildlife Institute of India (WII) visited Namibia from February 18 to 22.
- ✓ The next step would be the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the environment ministries of the two countries on the transfer of cheetahs to India.
- ✓ The five-member official delegation to Namibia included Dean of Wildlife Institute of India, one official from the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, the National Tiger Conservation Authority, the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, and the Madhya Pradesh Government.
- ✓ The Asiatic cheetah was wiped out in India and was formally declared extinct by the government in 1952.
- ✓ The last three of these animals were shot dead by Maharaja Ramanuj Pratap Singh Deo of Koriya, Surguja located in present-day Chhattisgarh

- ✓ The project aims to reintroduce the predator in the Indian wilderness by bringing in African cheetahs from Namibia (and possibly South Africa) to set up viable populations at several sites in the country.
- ✓ The first lot of cheetahs will be settled in MP's Kuno National Park in Sheopur, Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ The park was one of the three potential sites recommended in 1992 for the cheetah project.

PERSONALITIES

- **On February 25, US President Joe Biden - nominated federal appeals court Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the U.S. Supreme Court**



- ✓ With this, Jackson becomes the first Black woman to serve on the US Supreme Court
- ✓ She succeeds retiring liberal Justice Stephen Breyer, who at 83 is the court's oldest member
- ✓ Of the 115 people who have ever served on the nation's top judicial body, only two have been Black and both of those were men.
- ✓ Jackson, if confirmed by the Senate, would become the sixth woman ever to serve on the court, which currently has three female justices.
- ✓ The Senate voted 53-44 last year to confirm Jackson after Biden nominated her to the influential US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.
- ✓ Earlier, Jackson has also served as a United States District Judge for the District of Columbia from 2013 to 2021
- ✓ Jackson comes with a wealth of experience in varied capacities as a federal appellate judge, a federal district court judge, a member of the US Sentencing Commission, an attorney in private practice, and as a federal public defender.