

## **EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—JANUARY 15, 2023**

### **TAMIL NADU**

- **On January 14, Chief minister M K Stalin - awarded medals to 3,184 police personnel across the state**



- ✓ The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Medals are announced and awarded on the occasion of the Pongal festival every year.
- ✓ These awards were given in recognition of the outstanding devotion to duty displayed by the personnel concerned of police, fire and rescue services, prisons and correctional services departments and with a view towards motivating them.
- ✓ This year, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Constabulary Medals have been presented to 3,000 police personnel (men and women) of the rank of Grade-II constables, grade-I constables, head constables, havildars and special sub-inspectors.
- ✓ Further, the CM ordered award of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Medals to 118 fire and rescue services personnel and 60 prisons and correctional services personnel in recognition of their outstanding devotion to duty.
  - ✓ The monthly medal allowance of Rs.400 to the recipients of these medals will be sanctioned with effect from February 1, 2023, irrespective of their ranks.
- ✓ In addition, the chief minister has ordered the award of the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Medal for Excellence in Technical and Specialised Services to six

personnel, two each from the police radio branch, dog squad and police photographers.

- ✓ The officers/personnel concerned will receive the lumpsum grant depending upon their ranks.
- ✓ These medals along with a scroll with the signature of the chief minister, will be presented to the recipients at a ceremonial medal parade to be held in due course.

## STATES

### ➤ **World's first palm leaf manuscript museum – was recently opened in Thiruvananthapuram**

- ✓ The museum is mainly a collection of unusual artefacts that relate to the political, social, and economic life of Travancore kingdom from 650 AD to the end of the 19th century, besides hosting documents relating to territories of Kochi and Malabar.

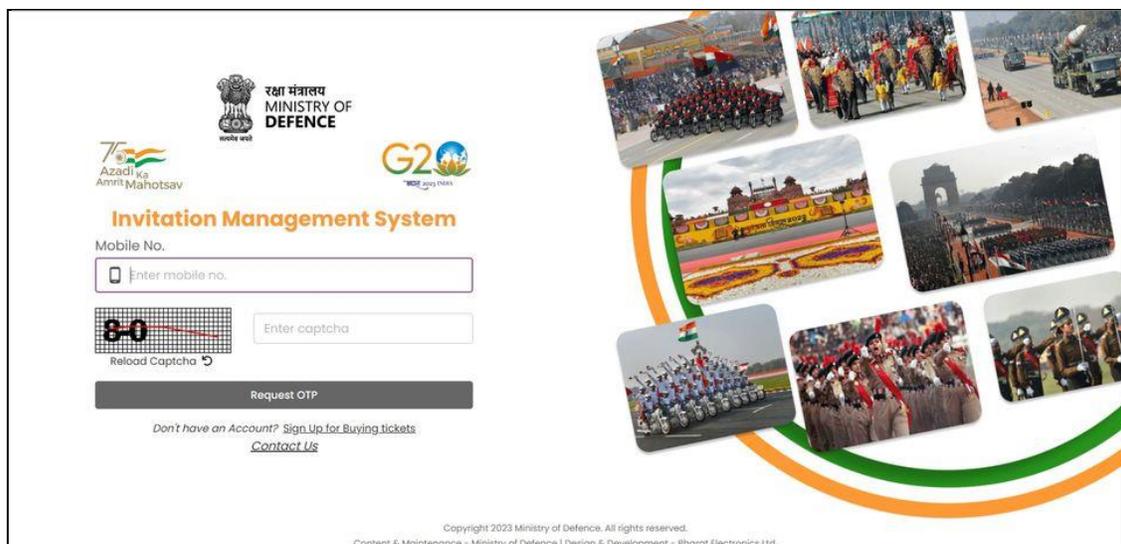


- ✓ It has eight theme-based galleries, which have been developed at a budget of Rs. 3 crore
- ✓ It is the world's only manuscript museum that solely displays sheaves of palm leaf materials and allied paraphernalia such as styluses and carriers of the Cadjan bundles
- ✓ The 187 manuscripts at the museum include documents written on cured and treated palm leaves
- ✓ The museum hosts accounts of the famed Battle of Colachel wherein the valiant Travancore king Anizham Thirunal Marthanda Varma (1729-58) defeated the Dutch East India Company at Colachel, 20 km northwest of Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu
  - ✓ The 1741 victory ended Dutch expansion in India, and Travancore under Marthanda Varma became Asia's first state to defeat any European power.

# NATIONAL

- **The decennial Census exercise - has been postponed atleast until September 2023 and might even be done only after the Lok Sabha elections in 2024.**
- ✓ The census is the exercise of compiling and analysing demographic, social, and economic data of the population
- ✓ The last census was held in 2011 and the latest exercise should have been held in 2021 but was postponed due to Covid pandemic
- ✓ In 2019, the union government announced Census 2021 plans and allocated Rs 8,754.23 crore for it and 3.3 million enumerators were to be mobilised for data collection.
- ✓ It was to be carried out in two phases -- the first from April to September 2020 and the second in February 2021.
- ✓ The first census was started in 1872 and since then, for 152 years, it has been conducted every 10 years without any disruptions
- ✓ The responsibility of census exercise lies with the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner (ORGI), under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ✓ The Census Act of 1948 was passed just after Independence and a separate office of Registrar General of India (RGI) was established under the home ministry.
- ✓ The census work has to be preceded by the work of National Population Register (NPR) which itself is a precursor to the creation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC).
  
- **For the first time, the government - has notified regulatory standards for basmati rice which will be enforced from August 1, 2023.**
- ✓ The notification issued by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) says setting a regulatory standard will ensure supply of genuine basmati rice, in both domestic and export markets.
- ✓ The standards are aimed at establishing fair practices in the trade of Basmati rice and protect consumer interest, both domestically and globally.
- ✓ As per these standards, Basmati rice shall possess natural fragrance characteristic of basmati rice and be free from artificial colouring, polishing agents and artificial fragrances.
- ✓ These standards also specify various identity and quality parameters for basmati rice such as the average size of grains, maximum limits of moisture, uric acid, and damaged grains.
- ✓ Being a premium quality rice, basmati rice is prone to various types of adulteration which include, among others, undeclared blending of other non-basmati varieties of rice.

- ✓ Basmati is a premium variety of rice cultivated in the Himalayan foothills of the Indian subcontinent and is universally known for its long grain size, fluffy texture and unique inherent aroma and flavour.
  - ✓ Agro-climatic conditions of the specific geographical areas where basmati rice is grown; as well as the method of harvesting, processing and ageing of the rice contributes to the uniqueness of the variety
  - ✓ The guidelines stated further that due to the rice's unique quality attributes, basmati is a widely consumed variety of rice both domestically and globally and India accounts for two thirds of its global supply.
- **Minister of state for defence Ajay Bhatt – unveiled the ‘Invitation management portal’ to manage invitations for Independence Day and Republic Day celebration events.**



- ✓ The portal – [www.aamantran.mod.gov.in](http://www.aamantran.mod.gov.in) – is part of government's e-governance initiative.
  - ✓ This portal will allow for the extension of e-Invitations to dignitaries and guests, as well as the online sale of tickets to the general public
  - ✓ It will make the entire process user-friendly and environment-friendly and bridge the gap between the government and the common people.
  - ✓ QR code-based authentication for enhanced security and digital delivery of passes/tickets through emails/SMS are among the key features of the Aamantran portal.
  - ✓ Tickets purchased on the portal will be non-cancellable and non-transferable.
- **The International Kite Festival - was celebrated with colourful kites in Ahmedabad and other cities of Gujarat from January 8 to 14.**
- ✓ Ahmedabad first hosted the International Kite Festival on the occasion of Uttarayan in 1989



- ✓ Earlier, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel inaugurated the International Kite Festival 2023 in Ahmedabad, which will feature the participation of around 125 kite flyers from 68 countries.
- ✓ The event will also include 65 kite flyers from 14 states in India
- ✓ The theme of the festival is "One Earth, One Family, One Future," based on the G-20 theme.
- ✓ Apart from Ahmedabad, the International Kite festival will also be organized in Surat, Vadodara, Rajkot, Dwarka, Somnath, Dhordo, and Kevadia.
- ✓ In Gujarat, the kite festival is organised on the occasion of Makar Sankranti every year.
- ✓ It is known as 'Uttarayan' in the state and is celebrated by flying kites with great zeal and joy.

## INTERNATIONAL

- **The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - has approved the use of the world's first honey bee vaccine.**
- ✓ It is the first ever vaccine approved for any insect in the US.
- ✓ The USDA issued a conditional vaccine license to the US-based Diamond Animal Health company, the collaborating manufacturer for the vaccine developer, Dalan Animal Health
- ✓ The new vaccine was developed to protect bee colonies from American foulbrood disease, a bacterial infection that attacks bee larvae and weakens honeybee colonies.
- ✓ American foulbrood is an aggressive bacterium that spreads quickly from hive to hive, and can even wipe out colonies of up to 60,000 bees.
- ✓ Furthermore, unlike traditional vaccines, the honeybee vaccine is not administered via a syringe.
- ✓ It works by introducing an inactive 'dead' version of the bacterium 'Paenibacillus' into the royal jelly fed to the queen, thereby resulting in immunity for the queen's larvae
- ✓ The vaccine would be available for purchase in the US in 2023

## CONFERENCES & SUMMITS

- **India's first-of-its-kind inclusive festival called the 'Purple Fest' – was held in Goa from January 6 to 8, 2023**



- ✓ Goa State Commission for Persons with Disabilities, in association with Directorate of Social Welfare and Entertainment Society of Goa hosted the 'Purple Fest: Celebrating Diversity'
- ✓ Union Minister for Social Justice & Empowerment, Dr. Virendra Kumar, was present at the opening ceremony
- ✓ The festival celebrates persons with disabilities and provides an opportunity to illustrate how disabilities are not barriers to them.
- ✓ The event featured live performances, grand exhibitions, sporting events, immersive experience zones, and an innovation mela.
- ✓ It also included exhibitions showcasing the latest assistive technologies developed for individuals with disabilities.
- ✓ The color purple is often associated with disability and has become popularly used in recent years to symbolize the positive contributions made by individuals with disabilities in society and the workforce.

## SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Pune-based Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) – has developed a novel material called 'viologen-unit grafted organic framework' (iVOFm) to remove pollutants from water**
- ✓ The new technique uses a custom-designed unique molecular sponge-like material — macro/microporous ionic organic framework — which can swiftly clean polluted water by absorbing contaminants
- ✓ It is able to absorb and remove a wide range of toxic contaminants, including organic dyes, antibiotics, pesticides, iodides, and oxo-pollutants
- ✓ The new material can capture of all the pollutants in the water — both organic and inorganic at a very fast rate— with over 93% removal in just 30 seconds.

- ✓ Traditionally, sorbent materials have been used to purify water by trapping pollutants through an ion-exchange process.
- ✓ However, these materials suffer from poor kinetics and specificity, leading to limited effectiveness in removing contaminants.

## DEFENCE

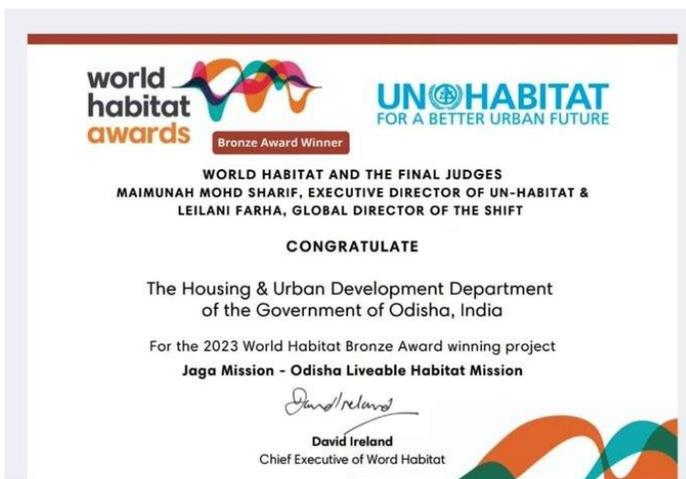
- **The Indian Navy - has signed an agreement with Sagar Defence Engineering Pvt. Ltd for armed autonomous boat swarms under 'SPRINT' initiative**



- ✓ SPRINT is an initiative launched to promote development of niche defence technologies by domestic companies.
- ✓ This is the 50th contract under 'SPRINT', which aims at the development of 75 indigenous technologies by the industry for the Indian Navy under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav in 2022.
- ✓ 'SPRINT' stands for 'Supporting Pole-vaulting In R&D through Innovations for Defence Excellence (IdeX), Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) and Technology Development Acceleration Cell' (TDAC).
- ✓ This framework was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi last July.

## AWARDS

- **Odisha - has won the UN-Habitat's World Habitat Awards 2023 for Jaga Mission, a 5T initiative of the state**



- ✓ 'Jaga Mission', an initiative by the Naveen Patnaik government to upgrade almost 3,000 slums in Odisha, has won Bronze award for the second time at an awards show organised by World Habitat, in partnership with UN-Habitat.
- ✓ Jaga mission is the world's largest land titling and slum upgrading program which aims at empowering the lives of slum dwellers.
- ✓ The BJD government in Odisha has set itself an ambitious target of becoming the first slum-free state in India.
- ✓ The 'Jaga Mission' programme is aimed at upgrading all of the state's 2,919 slums along with improving the living conditions for 1.7 million people
- ✓ The annual corpus for the project is approximately Rs 5 billion, which is borne largely from funds set aside in the state budget and grants from the Centre and other states.
- ✓ Inspired by Odisha, the programme is now being replicated in Punjab, where it will benefit 1.4 million people
- ✓ Earlier in 2019, Odisha's Jaga mission had received World Habitat Awards for its success in providing land tenure security to the slum dwellers
- ✓ The awards recognise and highlight innovative, outstanding and revolutionary housing ideas, projects and programmes from across the world.