



EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS—MARCH 14, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- The Tamil Nadu government - has issued an order banning performance of 'Kuravan-Kurathi' dance in the cultural programmes across the state.
- ✓ The state also removed the dance from the list of 100 folk arts identified for registration of members with the Tamil Nadu folk artists welfare board.
- ✓ The order for this has been issued by Principal Secretary, Department of Tourism, Culture and Charitable Institutions.
- ✓ Although this art is included in the recognized art list of the State Folk Artists Welfare Board, no one has yet registered as a member.
- ✓ The joint action committee of the Tamil Nadu Kuravan, Malaikuravan and Kuravar Sangankal had made a request to the government to ban Kuravan-Kurathi aattam.
- ✓ The Government has banned the Kuravan-Kurathi dance based on the request of the Director of Arts and Culture
- ✓ On January 11, the Madurai bench of the Madras high court ordered the government to ensure that no dance performance was identified as using a caste/tribal community's name to insult or degrade people belonging to such community.
- ✓ The Kuravan-Kurathi dance, which was performed as a secondary game of karakatam, was performed obscenely, insulting and denigrating Kuravar communities

STATES

- Madhya Pradesh government – has launched a new scheme 'Mukhyamantri Ladli Behna Yojana' recently
- ✓ The new scheme was launched by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan in Bhopal on March 5
- ✓ Under the scheme, eligible women of the state will be given Rs.1,000 assistance per month

- ✓ The amount will be credited to the accounts on the 10th of every month to the bank account of the beneficiaries



- ✓ Women from 23 to 60 years of age who have less than 5 acres of land or an annual income of less than Rs.2.5 lakhs are eligible to get the benefits under the scheme
- ✓ The government aims to reach out to one crore women in the state under the scheme, for which a provision of Rs.8,000 crore has been made in the annual Budget of 2023.

NATIONAL

- On March 13, the Union Government - has sought parliament's permission to spend an additional Rs 1.48 lakh crore in the current financial year.
- ✓ The second batch of supplementary demands for grants for the 2022-23 fiscal was tabled in the Lok Sabha by Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary.
- ✓ The additional gross expenditure for the same period will be Rs.2.71 lakh crore, as per the government statement.
- ✓ Of the total additional spending, Rs 36,325 crore would go towards fertilizer subsidy and Rs 25,000 crore will be transferred to the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) maintained by the Department of Telecom
- ✓ A sum of Rs 28,000 crore will go for defence pension under One Rank One Pension policy.
- ✓ An additional sum of Rs 33,700 crore has been demanded GST compensation to states.
- ✓ The government will spend Rs.41.87 lakh crore in 2022-23, according to the Union budget presented on February 1, 2023.
- ✓ The government's fiscal deficit target for the ongoing fiscal, which will end on 31 March, is set at 6.4% of GDP.
- ✓ The Budget session of Parliament is reconvened on March 13.

PERSONALITIES

- **Surekha Yadav, Asia's first woman loco pilot - has now become the first female to operate the newly-introduced semi-high speed Vande Bharat Express train**



- ✓ On March 13, Surekha Yadav achieved the feat as she piloted the semi-high speed train between Solapur station and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) in Mumbai.
- ✓ CSMT-Solapur Vande Bharat Express was flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in February
- ✓ Earlier on International Women's Day, the Central Railways operated the prestigious Mumbai-Pune Deccan Queen Express and CSMT-Kalyan ladies' special local train with all-women crews.
- ✓ Hailing from Satara in the western Maharashtra region, Surekha Yadav became India's first female train driver in 1988
- ✓ For her accomplishments, Surekha Yadav has received numerous honours at both the state and national levels.
- ✓ Mumtaz Kazi carries the distinction of being the first suburban motor woman of Asia
- ✓ She served as a guard in the K99 local, a ladies' special train running between the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT) in Mumbai and Kalyan
- **Colonel Geeta Rana - has become the first woman officer to take over command of an independent field workshop in the Eastern Ladakh sector with China.**
- ✓ She is from the Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME).
- ✓ Rana's appointment comes after the army, in February-end, began assigning women officers to command roles for the first time, outside the medical stream.
- ✓ Rana trained at the Chennai-based Officers' Training Academy, and was commissioned into the army in 2000

- ✓ In her 23-year military career, she has served at different places including Sikkim and Jammu and Kashmir.



- ✓ Rana has also served as an instructor at an EME training establishment.
- ✓ She hails from Pauri in Uttarakhand, which gave the country its first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Gen Bipin Rawat.
- ✓ In early January, the army for the first time deployed a woman officer, Captain Shiva Chouhan, at Siachen, the world's highest and coldest battleground.
- ✓ The army also deployed its largest contingent of 27 women peacekeepers in Sudan's disputed region of Abyei, where they are performing security-related tasks in a challenging mission as part of the United Nations Interim Security Force (UNISFA).

DEFENCE

- On March 13, the defence ministry - signed a Rs.934 crore contract for a “normal refit” of the old Russian-origin submarine INS Sindhukirti with the Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) at Visakhapatnam



- ✓ Upon the completion of the refit, the Sindhukirti Submarine will be battle-ready and will join the active submarine fleet of the Indian Navy.

- ✓ The project involves more than 20 micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and would lead to employment generation of 1,000 man-days per day for the project duration
 - ✓ Earlier, the submarine had spent more than nine years between 2006-2015 at HSL for a mid-life refit
 - ✓ The refit was planned to be completed in three years, but eventually took nine years because of the mismanagement on the part of the shipyard and the delay caused by Russian experts
 - ✓ INS Sindhukirti is the third Kilo Class Diesel Electric Submarine and is one of the oldest submarines of the Indian Navy and was acquired from the erstwhile Soviet Union back in 1990.
 - ✓ The submarine was commissioned on June 7, 1990 and has served the country in various capacities since then.
 - ✓ Like other Kilo class submarines, this is slower than nuclear submarines, can carry 70 personnel and has the capability to remain on a mission for almost 40 days
 - ✓ The submarine is named after the legendary 4th century AD king, Vikramaditya, as Sindhukirti means “Fame of the Ocean”
 - ✓ INS Sindhukirti has taken part in a number of naval exercises and operations over the years, including Operation Parakram against Pakistan in 2001-02.
 - ✓ In 2008, the submarine collided with a merchant vessel off the coast of Mumbai, causing damage to the submarine's periscope
 - ✓ Sindhukirti has a submerged displacement of 1860 tonnes and a length of 67.5 metres.
 - ✓ When submerged, the submarine has a top speed of 20 knots (around 37kmph) and can dive to a depth of 300 metres
- **The third edition of the multilateral naval exercise ‘La Perouse’ - kicked off in the Indian Ocean on March 13**



- ✓ The biennial exercise La Perouse is conducted by the French Navy involving participation of personnel, ships and integral helicopters of Royal Australian Navy, Indian Navy, Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force, Royal Navy and the United States Navy
- ✓ It aims to enhance maritime domain awareness and optimise maritime coordination among participating navies in the Indo-Pacific region
- ✓ The two-day exercise will include complex and advanced naval operations, including surface warfare, anti-air warfare, air defence exercises, cross-deck landings and tactical manoeuvres.
- ✓ From India, indigenously built guided missile frigate INS Sahyadri and fleet tanker INS Jyoti will be participating in this edition of the exercise.
- ✓ The first edition of the France-initiated La Pérouse multinational exercise was held in 2019 with the participation of the navies of Australia, Japan and the US.
- ✓ In the second edition in 2021, the Indian Navy joined in for the first time.

RANKINGS

- India remained the world's top arms importer, according to a report released by Stockholm-based defence think-tank SIPRI on March 13



- ✓ India retained its top position among 167 major arms importers with 11% share, even though its arms imports dropped by 11% between 2013-17 and 2018-22
- ✓ According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the five largest arms importers in the world during 2018-22 were India (11%), followed by Saudi Arabia (9.6%), Qatar (6.4%), Australia (4.7%) and China (4.7%),
 - ✓ These five countries together imported 36% of the world's arms during the five-year period
 - ✓ India has been the leading importer of arms and ammunition since 1993.
- ✓ The five largest arms exporters among 63 global exporters during the same period were the United States (40%), followed by Russia (16%), France (11%), China (5.2%) and Germany (4.2%).
- ✓ Russia was India's largest arms supplier in the periods between 2013-17 and 2018-22, but its share of arms imports to India fell from 64% to 45%
 - ✓ France emerged as the second-largest arms supplier to India between 2018-22 at 29%, followed by the US at 11%

- ✓ Aside from Russia and France, India also imported arms during this five-year period from Israel, South Korea, and South Africa which are among the top arms exporters globally.
- ✓ The United States continues to be the largest international exporter of major arms, accounting for 40% of the global share, rising by 14% from 2013-2017.
 - ✓ As per the report, the United States' share of global arms exports increased from 33 to 40%, while Russia's fell from 22 to 16%.
- ✓ Saudi Arabia was the world's second-largest arms importer during 2018-22 and received 9.6% of all arms imports in the period
- ✓ The report said three of the top 10 importers during 2018-22 were in the Middle East -- Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Egypt.
- ✓ Among the various regions, Asia and Oceania, accounted for 41% of arms imports, followed by the Middle East with 31%, Europe with 16%, the Americas with 5.8%, and Africa with 5%.
- ✓ SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, arms control, among others.