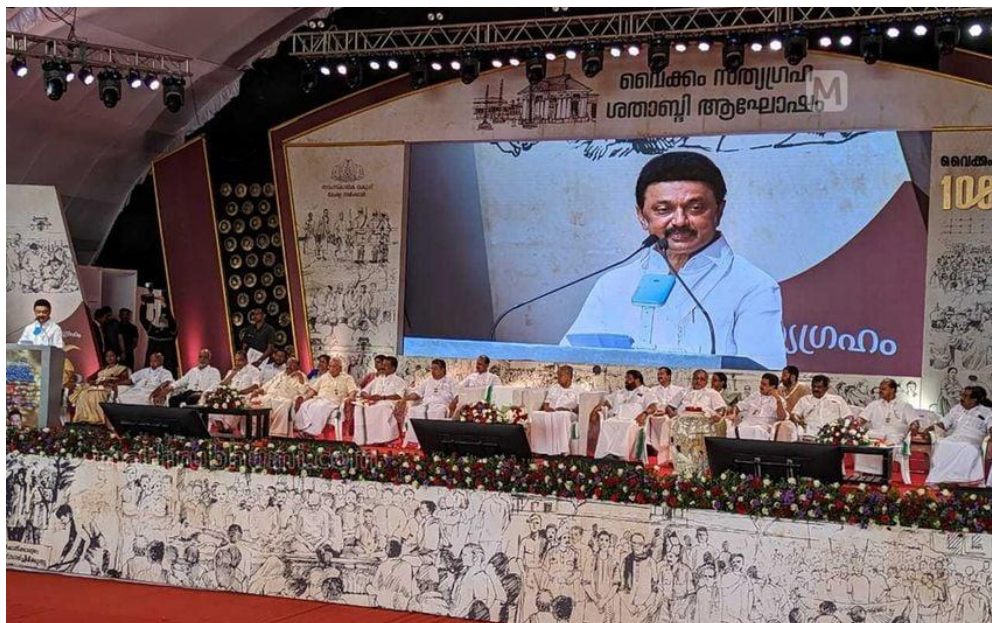




EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – APRIL 2, 2023

TAMIL NADU

- Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his Tamil Nadu counterpart M K Stalin - jointly inaugurated the centenary celebrations of the Vaikom Satyagraha on April 1
- ✓ They were speaking at a gathering in Vaikom town of Kerala's Kottayam district.



- ✓ During his address, CM Stalin said the Vaikom Satyagraha was a pioneering struggle that inspired several movements against untouchability in many parts of the country.
- ✓ He urged secular, democratic forces to work hard with unity for the social justice-led ideology of reformist leader Periyar E V Ramasamy
- ✓ CM Stalin said Periyar stood for self-respect, socialism, equality, humanism, non-discrimination, self-development, social justice, secularism and scientific temper

- ✓ Kerala CM Vijayan said the festivities will last 603 days, marked by programmes reminiscent of the historic struggle, a landmark in Kerala's renaissance movement.
 - ✓ The chief ministers of both states offered floral tributes to the Vaikom Satyagraha leaders before the public meeting.
 - ✓ Both the leaders together released the work of noted scholar Pazha Adiyaman's Tamil work 'Vaikom Porattam' in Malayalam.
 - ✓ The Vaikom struggle led by social reformer T K Madhavan began on March 30, 1924 and ended on November 23, 1925 and an event to mark the victory of the satyagraha movement was chaired by Periyar on November 29, 1925 at Vaikom.
 - ✓ As part of his struggle, Periyar was first sent to jail at Aruvikutti for a month and the second time he was lodged in a Thiruvananthapuram prison after he was sentenced to four months rigorous imprisonment.
 - ✓ The Vaikom struggle also inspired Dr BR Ambedkar to take forward his "Mahar protest" and in Tamil Nadu, it galvanized the temple entry movement.
- **The ferry service between Rameswaram and Sri Lanka – is set to begin in the next few months**
- ✓ This was announced by Highways and minor ports minister E V Velu in the assembly on April 1

KEY ANNOUNCEMENTS ON HIGHWAY INFRA

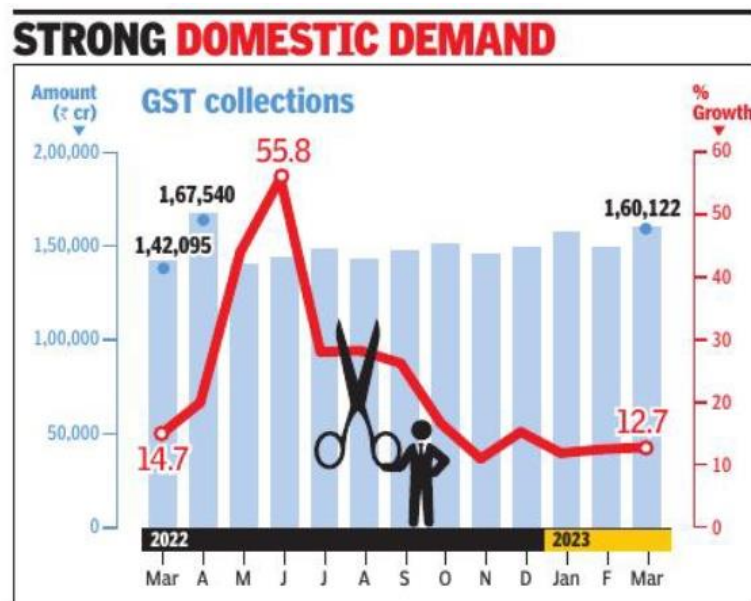
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Road projects at ₹1,093cr under 'CM in Your Constituency' scheme ➤ State highways authority will be made statutory authority by a legislation, on the lines of NHAI, to develop roads, including expressways ➤ Mobile application to allow public to capture potholes in state highways and get rectified by the department in 24 hours ➤ Digitisation of assets of the highways department, such as Right of Way details, trees and road equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Plantation of five lakh saplings along state highways to commemorate late chief minister M Karunanidhi's centenary year ➤ 217 causeways will be replaced with high level bridges at ₹787cr under Chief Minister's All Season Uninterrupted Connectivity scheme ➤ Thuraiyur, Tirupattur and Namakkal will get bypasses at ₹286cr, while 9 districts will get 13 bridges across rivers at ₹216cr
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- ✓ According to the Minister, efforts would be taken to launch short ferry service between Rameswaram and Talaimannar (50km) and Kankesanthurai (100km)
- ✓ The state maritime board has sent a detailed project report to the Centre for approval.
- ✓ The Union ministries of external affairs and port, shipping and waterways have agreed to the project.
- ✓ The ferry can go at a speed of 30 knots between Rameswaram and Talaimannar.
- ✓ With 150-passenger seating capacity, the travel time will be one and two hours to Talaimannar and Kankesanthurai respectively.
- ✓ The Union government will float Expression of Interest to identify ferry operators to operate from Rameswaram.

- ✓ The ferry service will help small time traders as well, as personal baggage will be allowed in the range of 100-150kg.
- ✓ Subsequently, cargo services will be allowed from Rameswaram to Lanka with a capacity of 300-500 tonnes.

NATIONAL

- **The Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection - rose 13% to over Rs.1.60 lakh crore in March, according to the finance ministry**
- ✓ This is the fourth time in the current financial year that the gross GST collection has crossed Rs.1.5 lakh crore



- ✓ The collection of Rs.1,60,122 crore during the month of March 2023 is the second-highest collection ever recorded.
- ✓ In April 2022, GST collection had touched a record high of close to Rs 1.68 lakh crore.
- ✓ The number of returns filed during March at 91.4% were at the highest level since the rollout of the indirect tax regime in July 2017
- ✓ This month witnessed the highest IGST collection ever.
- ✓ The collection of integrated GST or IGST, levied on interstate sales and imports, was estimated at Rs.82,907 crore in March, higher than the previous record of Rs.81,939 crore in April 2022.
- ✓ The gross GST revenue collected in the month of March 2023 includes CGST of Rs.29,546 crore, SGST of Rs.7,314 crore, IGST at Rs. 82,907 crore and cess at Rs.10,355 crore
- ✓ The total gross collection for 2022-23 stands at Rs.18.10 lakh crore and the average gross monthly collection for the full year is Rs.1.51 lakh crore.
- ✓ **Further, the transactions under the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) crossed a new record of Rs.14 lakh crore in March 2023**

- ✓ The volume of transactions has also hit a new high of 865 crore during the month.
 - ✓ The value of UPI transactions during March 2023 is 13% higher than the Rs.12.35 crore in February 2023, while in terms of volume, they are 18% higher than 728 crore in February 2023
 - ✓ In comparison to March 2022, the transactions are 60% higher in volume and 45% more in terms of value of transactions.
- **The sale of hallmarked gold jewellery and gold artefacts with only a six-digit alphanumeric HUID number - will be permitted from April 1, 2023**



- ✓ This means that the earlier system, which allows selling jewellery bearing 'four marks' as well, will cease to be valid after March 31.
 - ✓ The four marks refer to the logo of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), purity of the article, jeweller's logo and logo of Assaying and Hallmarking Centre).
 - ✓ Hallmark Unique Identification (HUID) number, which was introduced on July 1, 2021, is a traceable 6-digit alphanumeric code with numbers and letters.
 - ✓ Initially, both the old hallmarked jewellery with four marks without HUID and six-digit HUID mark jewellery were allowed to be sold.
 - ✓ Each item of jewellery gets an HUID number at the time of hallmarking, and each HUID is different.
 - ✓ After HUID, the hallmark was reduced to three marks - HUID, BIS logo, and article purity.
 - ✓ The hallmark acts as a third-party assurance to consumers on the purity and fitness of these items.
 - ✓ On March 3, the consumer affairs ministry announced the rule change.
- **Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Ayush, Sarbananda Sonowal - recently inaugurated the real-time performance monitoring dashboard called 'Sagar Manthan' through video conference**
- ✓ The platform consists of all integrated data related to the ministry and other stakeholders

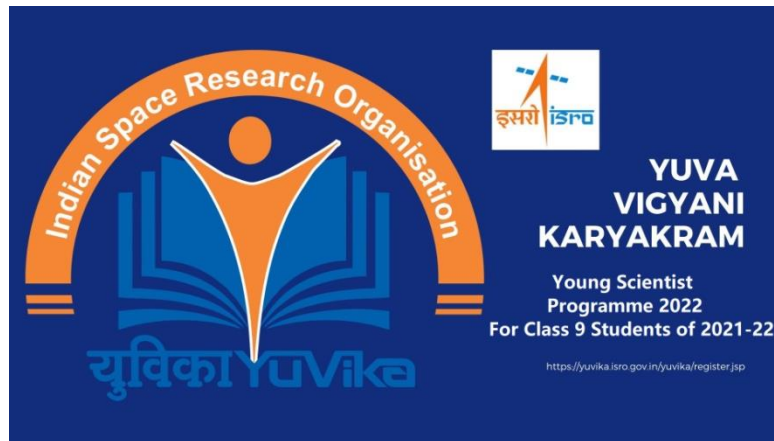


- ✓ It aims to co-ordinate the functioning of different departments and provide real-time information for decision making.
- **Union Minister of Agriculture Narendra Singh Tomar – recently launched the National Crop Insurance Portal’s digitized claim settlement module ‘DigiClaim’.**



- ✓ The module has been launched under the centre’s flagship scheme, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)
- ✓ It has been created to disburse claims electronically in a time-bound and automated manner, thereby benefitting farmers from six states - Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, and Haryana
- ✓ One of the significant advantages of the DigiClaim Module is that farmers’ claims will be processed directly to their respective bank accounts in a transparent and accountable manner.
- ✓ The settlement module has been integrated with the National Crop Insurance Portal (NCIP) and Public Finance Management System (PFMS).
- **The Isro – has recently launched a new program titled ‘Yuva Vignani Karyakram (YUVIKA)’ to encourage students develop a passion for space science**
- ✓ The YUVIKA program is open to students in the 9th standard (or equivalent) from all over India.

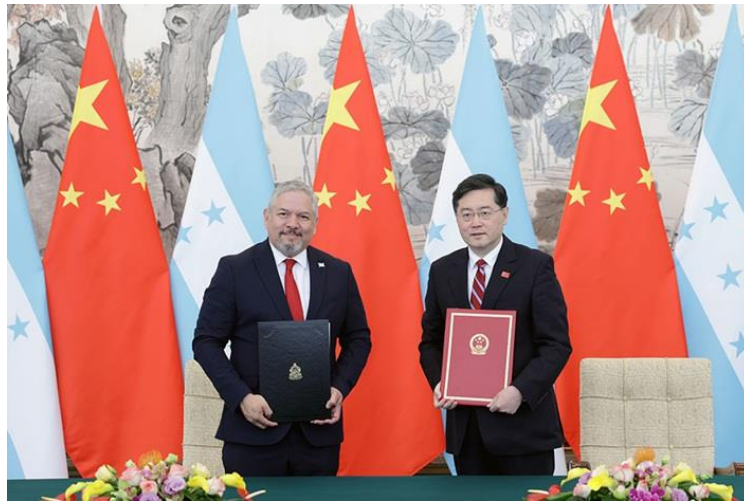
- ✓ Under the program, three students from each state/union territory will be selected and invited to participate in a two-week residential training program at various ISRO centers across the country.



- ✓ The program provides an opportunity for the students to explore the wonders of space science, space applications, and space technology.
- ✓ It involves physical lectures, interactive sessions, and hands-on training on various aspects of space science.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Italian authorities - have banned ChatGPT, the AI-powered language model developed by OpenAI.**
 - ✓ With this, Italy has become the first country to ban ChatGPT over privacy concerns.
 - ✓ The country's data protection agency has announced that the service will be blocked and subject to investigation due to the system's lack of a proper legal basis for collecting personal information about its users.
 - ✓ In addition to concerns over user privacy, Italian authorities have accused OpenAI of failing to verify the age of ChatGPT users and enforce rules prohibiting access for those under 13.
 - ✓ This could potentially expose young users to "unsuitable answers" from the chatbot, given their relative lack of development
- **China and the Central American country of Honduras – have signed a joint communiqué to establish diplomatic ties, after Honduras ended its diplomatic ties with Taiwan.**
 - ✓ Currently, only 13 countries - Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, Eswatini, Vatican City, Belize, Guatemala, Haiti, Paraguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines – recognise Taiwan officially
 - ✓ The new China-Honduras relationship was announced after the Honduran and Taiwanese governments made separate announcements that they were severing ties.



- ✓ China and Taiwan have been locked in a battle for diplomatic recognition since they split following a civil war in 1949.

INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

- **India and Malaysia - have reached a landmark agreement that will allow the two nations to settle trade in Indian Rupee, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)**
 - ✓ The move follows the decision by the RBI in July last year to allow settlement of international trade in Indian currency.
 - ✓ The RBI's initiative is aimed at facilitating the growth of trade and supporting the interests of the global trading community in the Indian rupee.
 - ✓ The India International Bank of Malaysia (IIBM) has already operationalized this mechanism by opening a special Rupee Vostro account through its corresponding bank in India, Union Bank of India.
 - ✓ Vostro accounts are used to make payments in domestic currency.
 - ✓ The opening of this account will allow Malaysia to use the Indian Rupee to settle trade payments.
 - ✓ This move will eliminate the need for foreign exchange conversion and will reduce transaction costs.
 - ✓ It is also expected to lead to increased trade between the two countries, especially in areas such as textiles, automobiles, and electronics.
 - ✓ India has also signed similar agreements with other countries such as Iran, Russia, and the United Arab Emirates.
 - ✓ Earlier this month, in response to a query in Rajya Sabha, the government said that RBI has so far allowed 18 countries to open Special Vostro Rupee Accounts (SVRAs) for settling payments in Indian rupees.
 - ✓ Special banks, including HDFC Bank and UCO Bank have opened as many as 30 SVRAs to facilitate rupee trade.

- **Bhutan king Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck - will travel to India from April 3 to 5 at the invitation of President Droupadi Murmu**



- ✓ The king, who will be accompanied by Bhutan's foreign minister and other senior officials, will hold meetings with Murmu and also Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ The king's visit is in keeping with the tradition of regular high level exchanges between the two countries

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

- **Researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras - have developed a three-dimensional paper-based portable device that can detect adulteration of milk in 30 seconds.**
- ✓ The test, which could be performed at home, can detect substances that are used as adulterating agents such as urea, detergents, soap, starch, hydrogen peroxide, sodium-hydrogen-carbonate, among others.
 - ✓ The novelty of the device is that it can detect multiple adulterants simultaneously.
 - ✓ Seven types of adulterants were detected in the milk sample with detailed colour interference analysis

DEFENCE

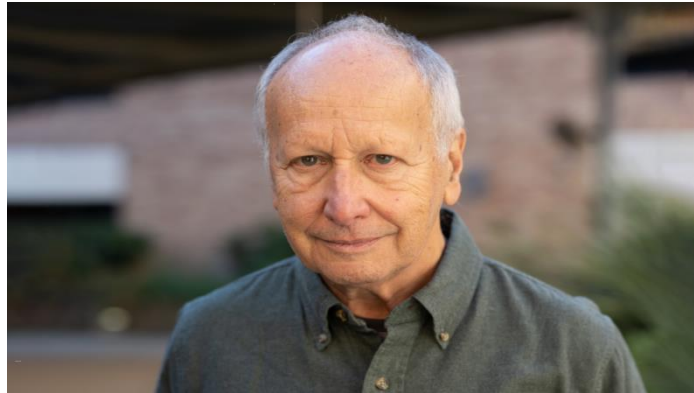
- ✓ **India - recently launched the INS Androth, second in an eight-ship series of Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC).**
- ✓ It was built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) in Kolkata



- ✓ INS Androth is designed to conduct anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, low intensity maritime operations and mine laying operations.
- ✓ The ship, which is 77.6 meters long and 10.5 meters wide, is propelled by three diesel-driven water jets, enabling it to attain a maximum speed of 25 knots

AWARDS

- ✓ **Argentinian-American mathematician Luis Caffarelli – has been awarded the Abel Prize this year**



- ✓ Caffarelli was born in Buenos Aires and completed his PhD from University of Buenos Aires
- ✓ He is also the first South American to receive the coveted prize
- ✓ Caffarelli was awarded the Abel Prize for his groundbreaking contributions to partial differential equations and their applications to geometric analysis.
- ✓ Caffarelli is a professor at the University of Texas at Austin and is considered as one of the world's leading experts in the field of Partial Differential Equations and their applications

