

## EVERYDAY CURRENT AFFAIRS – FEBRUARY 15, 2022

### STATES

- **Assam - has become the first state in the country to withdraw all Covid-related restrictions following improvement in the situation**
- ✓ Assam first went into lockdown on March 25 two years ago when the national lockdown was first imposed
- ✓ The state has withdrawn all restrictions on people's movement, gathering and travel, except the one barring unvaccinated people from entering public places
- ✓ Mandatory testing on arrival at airports, railway stations, road border points, etc shall be discontinued
- ✓ Likewise, compulsory testing for any patient coming to hospitals for treatment will also be discontinued.
- ✓ Accordingly, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) issued a new order abolishing all restrictions with effect from February 15
- ✓ As per the order, wearing masks, using of sanitiser and maintaining social distancing should be followed strictly.

### NATIONAL

- **On February 14, the government – has blocked 54 Chinese apps under Section 69(A) of the Information Technology Act over privacy, security, and espionage concerns**
- ✓ According to the electronics and information technology ministry, the 54 apps misused and transmitted real-time data to servers located in a hostile country.
- ✓ The request for blocking of apps was received from the home ministry under an emergency provision in the Information Technology Act.
- ✓ As per the government, the apps allegedly engaged in activities prejudicial to the country's sovereignty and integrity and also posed a serious threat to the security of the state and India's defence.
- ✓ In addition, there are other serious concerns as some of these apps can carry out espionage and surveillance activities via camera/microphone, accessing fine

location (GPS) and do malicious network activity similar to previously blocked apps

- ✓ The banned apps include Garena Free Fire Illuminate, Astracraft, FancyU pro, MoonChat, Barcode Scanner - QR Code Scan, Lica Cam, Beauty Camera, Equalizer, Viva Video Editor, Music player, Nice Video baidu, Rise of Kingdoms: Lost Crusade, Tencent Xriver, and Conqueror Online II.
  - ✓ In 2020, as many as 267 apps, including highly popular TikTok, CamScanner, WeChat, UC Browser and PUBG, were blocked by the Centre citing privacy and security threats amid border tensions between India and China
  - ✓ The government had initially blocked 59 apps on June 29, 2020 followed by 47 related/cloning apps on August 10, 2020, 118 apps were blocked on September 1, 2020 and another 43 apps were blocked on November 19, 2020
- **On February 14, the drug regulator's Subject Expert Committee - recommended restricted emergency use authorization (EUA) to Biological E's COVID-19 vaccine, Corbevax**
- ✓ The recommendation has been made for the age group 12 to 18 years, subject to certain conditions.
  - ✓ It has been sent now to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for final approval.
  - ✓ At present, Covid vaccines are given to only those aged 15 years and above
  - ✓ The government has not yet taken a decision on vaccinating those aged below 15 years.
  - ✓ Corbevax, India's first indigenously developed RBD protein subunit vaccine, has not been included in the country's vaccination drive
  - ✓ The Drugs Controller General Of India (DCGI) has already approved Corbevax for restricted use in an emergency situation in adults on December 28
  - ✓ The Corbevax vaccine is administered through an intramuscular route with two doses scheduled 28 days apart and is stored at 2 to 8 degrees Celsius and presented as 0.5 ml (single dose) and 5 ml (10 doses) vial pack.
  - ✓ According to the Health Ministry, the company has conducted phase 1/2, 2/3 clinical trials of its COVID-19 vaccine in the country.

## PERSONALITIES

- **The co-founders of Mindtree, an IT services and consulting firm – have collectively donated Rs 425 crore to the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) to set up a postgraduate medical school along with an 800-bed multi-speciality hospital in the IISc-Bengaluru campus.**
- ✓ This initiative, taken by philanthropists Susmita and Subroto Bagchi, alongside Radha and N S Parthasarathy, will help IISc to set up 'first-of-its-kind' not-for-profit multi-speciality hospital and medical school.



- ✓ To construct the hospital building, IISc signed a partnership with Susmita and Subroto Bagchi, and Radha and NS Parthasarathy on February 14, 2022
- ✓ The hospital will be designed by Ahmedabad-based architects Archi Medes (I) Consultants Pvt Ltd
- ✓ The academic highlight of this initiative will be an integrated dual degree MD-PhD programme
- ✓ The dual degree aims to generate a new breed of physician-scientists developing new treatments and healthcare solutions through clinical research
- ✓ They will be trained simultaneously in the hospital as well as in the science and engineering laboratories at IISc
- ✓ The estimated cost of the upcoming project is an estimated Rs 900 crore.
- ✓ The institute will be named the Bagchi-Parthasarathy Hospital and will have advanced facilities for diagnostics, treatment and research.
- ✓ The construction of the hospital is said to begin by June 2022 and will be fully operational by the end of 2024.
- ✓ This is the largest single private donation received by IISc since its founding in 1909
- ✓ Mindtree, now part of the L&T Group, was founded in 1999
- ✓ Subroto Bagchi, former chairperson and co-founder of the company, is known for taking up several socially responsible positions.
- ✓ In 2016, he quit his well-paying job at a tech major and became the chairperson of Odisha Skill Development Corporation (OSDC), where he reportedly worked for a salary of Rs 1 per month.
- ✓ In March 2020, he was appointed as Odisha government's spokesperson on the pandemic.
- ✓ In 2021, Subroto gave Rs 340 crore to set up a cancer hospital and a palliative care centre in Bhubaneswar.
- ✓ This 63-year-old philanthropist and his family have also been active contributors to the charity works of Aravind Eye Hospital, Amrita University and Ahmedabad University.

- ✓ He has served on the boards of IIM Bengaluru, Indian Oil, and IIIT Bhubaneswar, and currently serves on the board of governors of Software Technology Parks of India.
- ✓ Subroto is also a renowned writer, his best-sellers being The High-Performance Entrepreneur, Go Kiss the World, The Professional, MBA at 16, The Elephant Catchers and SELL.
- ✓ Subroto's wife Susmita, who apart from being a noted writer, is also Chairperson of Odisha Mo School Abhiyan
- ✓ Meanwhile, N S Parthasarathy, a Bengaluru-based entrepreneur, is the managing partner of Mela Ventures and co-founder of Mindtree.
- ✓ Mindtree grew from a venture capital funded startup in 1999 to a billion dollar revenue company in 2022 with his strenuous effort.
- ✓ Prior to co-founding Mindtree, Parthasarathy was in Wipro's global research and development team for 15 years.
- ✓ He also served on the NASSCOM IT Services council for four years.
- ✓ Parthasarathy is also a founder director of WhiteSwan Foundation, an NGO focusing on creating awareness on mental health

## APPOINTMENTS

- **On February 14, Tata Sons - appointed former Chairperson of Turkish Airlines, Ilker Ayci as the Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Air India**



- ✓ The 51-year-old served as chairman of Turkish Airlines from 2015 to January 2022 and will now assume his responsibilities at Air India on or before April 1, 2022
- ✓ Ayci began his career in 1994 and served at various positions at Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, the Universal Group based in Turkey, and general insurance companies.
- ✓ During his professional career, Ayci has been an advisor to the then Mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in the Metropolitan Municipality of Istanbul, where he took part in a number of development projects in Turkey's largest city.
- ✓ In 2011, he was made chairman of The Republic of Turkey Investment Support and Promotion Agency.



- ✓ Besides, he was also on the board of the Turkish Football Federation and Turkish Airlines Sports Club.
- ✓ Under Ayci's management, Turkish Airlines moved to its new hub in Istanbul, which is set to be the world's largest airport when fully completed in 2023.
- ✓ On January 27, Tatas took over control of Air India, its subsidiary Air India Express as well as 50% stake in joint venture AISATS
- ✓ Air India is the third airline brand of the Tata Group, which holds a majority interest in AirAsia India and Vistara, a joint venture with Singapore Airlines Ltd.
- ✓ At present, Air India controls over 4,400 domestic and 1,800 international landing and parking slots at domestic airports as well as 900 slots abroad
- ✓ Tatas had set up Tata Airlines in 1932, which was renamed as Air India in 1946
- ✓ The government had taken control of the airline in 1953, but JRD Tata continued to be its chairman till 1977.

## ISRO'S FIRST LAUNCH OF THE YEAR – A REPORT

- Indian Space & Research Organisation (Isro) - successfully launched the Earth Observation Satellite (EOS-04) onboard the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle, PSLV-C52, on February 14
- ✓ It was launched from the first launch pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh



- ✓ The launch carried two other rideshare satellites into orbit - a student satellite INSPIRESat and a spacecraft named INSAT-2DT that is a precursor of a future India-Bhutan Joint Satellite INS-2B
- ✓ This was the country's first mission this year, in fact, it was the first mission since the failure of the GSLV F10 mission in August 2021

THE HINDU

## First launch of 2022

On Monday, Earth Observation Satellite **EOS-04** and two small satellites — **INSPIRESat-1** and **INS-2TD** — were placed in the orbit by the **PSLV-C52** rocket. A detailed look at the payload

### DETAILS OF THE LAUNCH

- 1 Monday's was the 54th flight of PSLV and 23rd mission using PSLV-XL configuration with six PSOM-XLs (strap-on motors)
- 2 After a flight of about 18 minutes, the vehicle injected the satellites into their intended orbit
- 3 Primary satellite EOS-04 was put into the intended sun synchronous polar orbit of 529 km altitude at 6.17 a.m.

**EOS-04** Weight: 1,710 kg

Mission life: 10 years

Use: Radar Imaging Satellite is designed to provide high quality images under all weather conditions for applications such as agriculture, forestry and plantations, soil moisture and hydrology and flood mapping

**INSPIRESat-1** Weight: 8.1 kg

Mission life: 1 year

Use: Two payloads in the satellite are aimed at improving the understanding of ionosphere dynamics and the sun's coronal heating processes

- The satellite is built by Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology in association with Laboratory of Atmospheric and Space Physics at University of Colorado Boulder, NTU, Singapore and NCU, Taiwan

**INS-2TD** Weight: 17.5 kg

Mission life: 6 months

Use: Having a thermal imaging camera as its payload, the satellite benefits the assessment of land surface temperature, water surface temperature of wetland or lakes, delineation of vegetation (crops and forest) and thermal inertia (day and night)

- This is a technology demonstrator satellite from ISRO, a precursor to the India-Bhutan Joint Satellite (INS-2B)

SOURCE: AP  
IMAGES: ISRO

**Flying start:** ISRO's workhorse launch vehicle, PSLV, blasting off from the launchpad at Sriharikota at 5.59 a.m. on Monday

- ✓ This was also the first mission of the space agency under the chairmanship of S Somanath, who took over as the chairperson Isro and secretary department of space in January.
- ✓ PSLV-C52 deployed EOS-04 into an intended sun-synchronous polar orbit of 529km altitude above Earth
  - ✓ The satellite EOS-04 is realised at U R Rao Satellite Centre, Bengaluru.
  - ✓ The EOS-04 was assembled, integrated and tested by a consortium led by Bengaluru-based private firm Alpha Design Technologies Limited (ADTL), backed by Adani
  - ✓ In 2018, ADTL signed an agreement with Isro to work at ISITE (Isro Spacecraft Integration Test Establishment) to build satellites for the space agency
  - ✓ The 1,700kg EOS-04 satellite, also called Radar Imaging Satellite-1A (RISAT-1A), has been designed to provide high-quality images under all weather conditions for applications such as agriculture, forestry, and plantations, flood mapping, soil moisture & hydrology
  - ✓ The spacecraft, having a mission life of 10 years, will collect observation data in C-Band completing the observations done by Resourcesat, Cartosat, and RISAT-2B series.
- ✓ The spacecraft will also carry the 17.5 kg INS-2DT technology demonstrator satellite, which has a thermal imaging camera and can help in the assessment of land and water surface temperatures apart from mapping vegetation
  - ✓ The mission life of the INS-2TD is 6 months.
- ✓ The 8.1-kilogram student satellite dubbed INSPIRESat-1 has been developed by the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology, Laboratory of Atmospheric & Space Physics at the University of Colorado, US, Singapore's Nanyang Technological University, and National Central University in Taiwan
  - ✓ INSPIRESat-1 stands for International Research & Teaching Satellite Project satellite one
  - ✓ The satellite will aim at improving our understanding of the ionosphere dynamics and the sun's coronal heating process
  - ✓ The life span of the satellite is 1 year.
- ✓ This was the first launch of PSLV since the failure of the EOS-03 mission launched last year
- ✓ Going forward, Isro plans to conduct the PSLV-C53 mission in March, which will carry OCEANSAT-3 and INS 2B ANAND into orbit.

