

**IACE**

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**02<sup>nd</sup>&03<sup>rd</sup> April 2023**

**DESCRIPTIVE**

## ❖ Haryana becomes first state in India to have 100% electrified railway network

- In March 2023, the railway network in the state of Haryana was completely electrified by Indian Railways, making it the first state in the country to achieve 100% electrification of the railway network.
- The existing Broad Gauge network of Haryana is 1,701 route kilometer, which is now 100% electrified, resulting in saving on account of reduced line haul cost (about 2.5 times lower), heavier haulage capacity, increased sectional capacity, reduced operating & maintenance cost of electric loco, energy efficient and eco-friendly mode of transportation with reduced dependence on imported crude oil, saving of foreign exchange.
- Further new Broad Gauge network shall be sanctioned along with electrification, in sync with Railway's policy of 100% electrified network.

## ❖ Fino Payments Bank and Rajasthan Royals ties up for Digital Banking Partner

- Fino Payments Bank has renewed its association with Rajasthan Royals (RR) for Season 16 of the Indian premier cricket competition, IPL.
- Fino Bank will be RR's official digital banking partner.
- The bank made its maiden foray with the mega sporting event last season by partnering with RR as the digital payments partner.
- The newly launched FinoPay digital savings account is expected to get more traction through this engagement.

## ❖ **NASA appoints Indian-origin Amit Kshatriya to head 'Moon To Mars' Programme**

- Amit Kshatriya, an Indian-American software and robotics engineer was appointed as the first head of NASA's Moon to Mars Programme, with immediate effect.
- The new office aims to carry out the agency's human exploration activities on the Moon and Mars for the benefit of humanity.
- He will be responsible for planning and executing human missions to these celestial bodies for the betterment of humanity.
- NASA Administrator: Bill Nelson

## ❖ **Government hikes interest rates of small savings schemes**

- The Government has raised interest rates on post office saving schemes for the April-June 2023 quarter.
- The interest rate of the National Savings Certificate will now attract 7.7% up from 7%.
- The rate for Sukanya Samridhi has increased to 8% from 7.6%.
- The interest rate for PPF and savings deposits have been retained at 7.1% and 4%.
- Senior citizen savings scheme: 8.2%
- Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP): 7.5%
- KVP will now mature in 115 months as against 120 months earlier.

## ❖ **Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launches Sagar Setu Mobile App**

- Union Minister for Ports, Sarbananda Sonowal launched the App Version of the National Logistics Portal (Marine) named Sagar-Setu.

➤ The app has been envisaged with deliverables covering features like a Login Module, Letter of Credit, Bank Guarantee, Certification, Track, Trace and so on.

➤ Benefits for Traders:

➤ Improve convenience with the reduced turnaround time for approval and compliance.

➤ Increase the visibility of operations and tracking.

### ❖ **India Post Payments Bank launches WhatsApp Banking Services**

➤ India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) in collaboration with Airtel has launched WhatsApp Banking Services for IPPB customers in New Delhi.

➤ This channel will enable IPPB customers to seamlessly connect with the bank on WhatsApp and effortlessly avail of a host of banking services.

➤ It includes doorstep service requests, locating the nearest Post Office and much more.

➤ Airtel has been working with IPPB to deliver as many as 250 million messages per month to the bank's customers.

### ❖ **Eravikulam National Park gets it's fernarium**

➤ Eravikulam National Park (ENP) in Kerala, the natural habitat of Nilgiri tahr in Munnar, has a new Fernarium set up inside the park.

➤ This is the first time such a fern collection has been established in the hill station.

➤ 52 varieties of ferns have already been planted in the new Fernarium out of the 104 varieties planned to plant inside the park.

➤ The fern park has been set up near the orchidarium and will be opened to the public on April 20.

➤ Ferns are part of the Epiphytic family. They grow naturally in a soilless condition. They are the ecological indicator of healthy forests.

## ❖ ISRO Conducts Reusable Launch Vehicle Autonomous Landing Mission

- Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) had successfully conducted the autonomous test landing mission of the Reusable Launch Vehicle (RLV) at the Aeronautical Test Range (ATR) in Karnataka's Chitradurga.
- ISRO joined by DRDO successfully conducted the Reusable Launch Vehicle Autonomous Landing Mission (RLV LEX).
- The Reusable Launch Vehicle Autonomous Landing Mission (RLV LEX) test was the second of five tests and part of ISRO's efforts to develop space planes/shuttles that can travel to low earth orbits, deliver payloads and return to earth for use again.
- RLV performed approach and landing maneuvers using the Integrated Navigation, Guidance, and control system and completed an autonomous landing on the ATR airstrip.
- Along with ISRO, Indian Air Force (IAF), Centre for Military Airworthiness and Certification (CEMILAC), Aeronautical Development Establishment (ADE), and Aerial Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE) contributed to this test.

## ❖ World Autism Awareness Day 2023 is observed on April 2<sup>nd</sup>

- Autism is a serious developmental disorder that impairs the ability to communicate and interact.
- Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) impacts the nervous system and affects the overall cognitive, emotional, social and physical health of the affected individual. It is called a spectrum disorder because it affects individuals differently and to varying degrees.
- Common symptoms include difficulty with communication, difficulty with social interactions, obsessive interests and repetitive behaviours.

➤ This year marks the 16<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the day, which is recognized by the United Nations and aims to promote awareness and advocacy for the rights of the people with autism.

➤ World Autism Awareness Day 2023's topic this year is “**Contribution of Austic Individuals at Hoe, at Work, in the Arts and Policymaking**”.

### ❖ **Vice-Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh is the new Vice-Chief of Navy**

➤ Vice-Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh assumed the position of Vice-Chief of Naval Staff (VCNS) as part of a series of high-level changes in the Indian Navy.

➤ He was commissioned in 1986 and has previously served as Deputy Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (Operations).

➤ In recognition of his distinguished service, he was awarded the Nao Sena Medal in 2009 and the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal in 2020.

➤ As part of the recent high-level changes in the Indian Navy, Vice-Admiral Suraj Berry has assumed the position of Chief of Personnel (COP), while Vice-Admiral Atul Anand has taken over as Director-General Naval Operations (DGNO).

➤ Chief of Naval Staff: Admiral R Hari Kumar

➤ Indian Navy Founded: 26 January 1950

➤ Indian Navy headquarters: New Delhi

### ❖ **India, Malaysia can now trade in Indian rupee**

➤ The Ministry of External Affairs declared that trade between India and Malaysia can now be conducted using the Indian Rupee (INR) as a mode of settlement, in addition to other currencies.

➤ This move is expected to boost bilateral trade between the two countries and reduce transaction costs for businesses.

➤ This announcement followed the launch of the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023 by the Ministry of Commerce.

➤ The decision to trade in local currencies is part of a broader trend towards currency swap agreements between countries. These agreements are aimed at reducing reliance on the US dollar as the dominant currency for international trade and finance.

➤ This is particularly important for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which may not have the resources to manage currency risk effectively. By trading in local currencies, SMEs will be able to reduce their exposure to currency fluctuations and focus on growing their businesses.

➤ Currency of Malaysia: Ringgit

### ❖ **India targets to become a \$1 trillion tourism economy by 2047**

➤ India wants to be a \$1 trillion tourism economy with 100 million international visitors by 2047, the centenary year of its Independence.

➤ In order to achieve this, the focus is being put on various government-led initiatives under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode.

➤ In order to give impetus to the tourism sector this year, the government is observing 'Vision India-2023', a programme which invites the world to explore India.

➤ The vision of the second G-20 TWG meeting was to project domestic tourism in a mission mode and priority will be given to green tourism, digitalization, skilling, tourism MSMEs and destination management.

➤ Union Minister of Tourism: G Kishan Reddy

### ❖ **ICCR plans to build brand ambassador programme amongst foreign students in India**

➤ The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) plans to harness the power of over 48,000 foreign students in India as brand ambassadors of the country's heritage when they go back home.

- It is aiming to expand the country's artistic and creative footprint globally, by tapping into the experiences of foreign students studying here.
- It hopes that the more than 48,000 foreign students will be brand ambassadors of India's heritage, tourist destinations, textiles, yoga, ayurveda, and craft.
- CCR will start E-3, or Exit Engagement Evenings with foreign students, beginning three or four months before they finish their courses in various Central and State universities like the National Institutes of Technology, and Agricultural colleges of the country.
- This soft diplomacy is meant to spread the Indian story when students go back to their home countries.

### ❖ **India records highest ever defence export during FY 2022-23**

- In Financial Year 2022-23, India's defence exports have reached an all time high of 15920 crore rupees, which is almost Rs.3000 crore more than the previous Financial Year 2021-22.
- At present, India is now exporting to over 85 countries.
- India exports major platforms like Dornier-228,155mm Advanced Towed Artilley Guns (ATAGs), Brahmos Missiles, Akash Missile System, Simulators, Mine Protected Vehicles, Armoured Vehicles, PINAKA Rockets & Launchers.

### ❖ **Israel launches new Ofek- spy satellite into orbit**

- Israel has successfully launched the 'Ofek-13' spy satellite into space by the Shavit launch vehicle, from Palmachim Airbase spaceport.
- This satellite was manufactured by state –owned Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI).
- It is the latest in a series of domestically produced satellites that were first put into orbit in 1988.
- Immediately after launch, the satellite successfully entered orbit and started transmitting data, and completed an initial series of tests.

## ❖ Union bank opens 'Special Rupee Vostro' account in Malaysia

- Union Bank Of India has become the first Indian bank to open its 'Special Rupee Vostro' account through its corresponding bank in Malaysia i.e. India International bank of Malaysia for trade settlement in rupee.
- The trade between India and Malaysia can now be settled in the Indian Rupee, in addition to the current modes of settlement in other currencies.
- In July 2022, RBI decided to allow the settlement of India's international trade in rupee.