

**APRIL -2023 Set-1**



**Weekly Periodicals of  
Current Affairs**

**By**

**SUCCESS MANTRA (GTB Nagar)**

# PREFACE

It gives us great pleasure to release the monthly edition of the PRAVAHINI – Monthly e-Compendium & Weekly e-Periodicals of Current Affairs. The magazine's members have shown considerable cooperation as well as devotion. We at successmantra.in work tirelessly to create this magazine and bring it to you with a great sense of gratitude.

The PRAVAHINI APRIL-2023 eBook covers the current events that happened in the month of MARCH. Current Affairs is a crucial component of any competitive exams including CLAT, AILET, DU-LLB, HM, CAT, IAS, PCS, SSC, CUET, Banking, MBA and various other competitive examinations.

Current Affairs play the bigger role in many competitive and government exams. It holds the power of making or breaking your chance of success. Therefore, the candidates should cover the Current Affairs thoroughly and smartly.

The PRAVAHINI APRIL-2023 eBook is divided into different sections keeping in mind the need of various exams. The sections covered namely International, National, Economy, Ecology and Environment, Science & Technology, Legal Affairs, Sports, States News Makers and few others.

We would also be pleased to receive any suggestion that could assist us with the upcoming editions.

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## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

### KEY POINTS RELATED TO KERALA LOKAYUKTA

- **The Kerala Lokayukta**, has referred a case related to alleged nepotism and anomalies in the **Chief Minister's Distress Relief Fund (CMDRF)** to a three-member full bench for investigation.
- **What is Lokayukta?**
- The **Lokayukta is the Indian Parliamentary Ombudsman, executed into power**, through and for, each of the State Governments of India.
- It is an anti-corruption authority. The object of the **Lokayukta system in a state is to investigate grievances, allegations against public servants.**
- **Appointment:**
- The **lokayukta and upalokayukta are appointed by the Governor of the state**. While appointing, the governor in most of the states consults (a) the chief justice of the state high court, and (b) the leader of Opposition in the state legislative assembly.
- **Tenure:** In most of the states, the term of office fixed for lokayukta is of 5 years duration or 65 years of age, whichever is earlier. **He is not eligible for reappointment for a second term.**



### SWACHH BHARAT MISSION & ODF PLUS STATUS

- India has been facing several challenges related to sanitation, and to overcome these issues, the Indian government launched the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) in 2014. **The mission aims to achieve universal sanitation coverage and make the country open defecation free.**
- The Centre aims to bring around 50,000 more **villages across India under the Open Defecation Free (ODF) plus status under the SBM by 2024**. This means that these villages will have sustained their ODF status, ensured solid and liquid waste management, and will be visually clean.

- This is a significant milestone for India's sanitation scheme. To **achieve this, the Centre will provide ₹14,030 crore fund in FY24.**
- States that achieved **the ODF plus status:** Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka are the states that have achieved the ODF plus status. Tamil Nadu has a coverage percentage of 96% under the ODF plus status.

## OBCs & THE CURRENT CONFLICT

- A nationwide campaign is taking place against an MP due to his remarks against the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) following which he has also **been convicted of defamation and was disqualified from Parliament.**
- The **Kalelkar Commission (1953)**, was the first to identify backward classes other than the SCs and STs at the national level.
- Based on the recommendation of the Second Backward Classes Commission (**Mandal Commission**), the **Government of India** in August 1990 had notified 27% reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBCs) (or OBCs) in vacancies for civil posts and services that are to be filled on direct recruitment.
- After this was challenged, the **Supreme Court in November, 1992 (Indira Sawhney case)** upheld 27% reservation for OBCs, subject to exclusion of the creamy layer.
- The Justice Rohini committee was constituted in 2017 to submit its report on Sub-categorisation of Other Backward Classes (OBCs). **The committee is yet to submit its report.**



## DIAMOND JUBILEE OF CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

- On April 3, 2023, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, inaugurated the **Diamond Jubilee Celebrations of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi.
- The CBI was established by a resolution of the Ministry of Home Affairs, **Government of India on April 1, 1963, and has been the premier investigating agency in India since then.**



- During the programme, an Investiture Ceremony was held for the recipients of the **President's Police Medal for Distinguished Service and Gold Medal for Best Investigating Officers of CBI**, wherein the Prime Minister conferred medals to the awardees.
- It was a proud moment for the recipients, who had worked tirelessly to uphold the law and order of the country.

## SUBANSIRI LOWER HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT

- The **Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric project (SLHEP)** on the Assam-Arunachal border was recently hit by a landslide during pre-monsoon rain.
- However, no damage has been caused to the project and it is set to become operational by June 2023.
- ***What is the Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project?***
- SLHEP is an **under-construction gravity dam (nearly 90% of the work completed) with capacity 2000 MW (8x250 MW).**
- It is the biggest hydroelectric project undertaken in India so far and is a run of river scheme on river Subansiri.
- A **run-of-river dam is one in which the flow of water in the river downstream of the dam is the same as the flow of water upstream of the dam.** In other words, the dam doesn't hold back/store water behind it; it runs with the river.
- The construction of SLHEP is being undertaken by **National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) Limited.**



## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### FINLAND BECOMES 31ST MEMBER OF NATO


- Jens Stoltenberg, the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), has announced that Finland has become the **31st member of the alliance, thanks to Turkey's unanimous vote.**
- Despite Russia's opposition to Finland's membership, Turkey's approval has allowed the extension of NATO. Finland shares a long border of over 1,300 kilometers with Russia, and its decision to **join NATO was prompted by security concerns following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.**
- However, **Sweden's application to join NATO has been declined by Turkey and Hungary.**
- **Finland's membership in NATO has been a topic of discussion for many years**, with some arguing that it would help to strengthen Finland's defense capabilities, while others have expressed concerns about potential tensions with neighboring Russia.
- With Finland's membership, **NATO now includes most of the countries in Europe and North America.**
- ***What is NATO and its history?***
- **NATO, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization**, is an intergovernmental military alliance established in 1949. It was formed as a collective defense pact between North American and European nations to deter Soviet expansion and protect member states from potential Soviet aggression during the Cold War.
- The founding members of NATO were the United States, Canada, and ten European nations **including Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.** Since then, the alliance has expanded to include 31 member countries.





- The organization operates on the principle of collective defense, with members agreeing to mutual defense in response to an attack by an external party. **NATO also engages in crisis management, conflict prevention, and peacekeeping operations around the world.**

## INDIA & MALAYSIA AGREE TO SETTLE TRADE IN INDIAN RUPEES

- India and Malaysia have agreed to settle trade in Indian rupees. This mechanism is expected to enhance **India-Malaysia bilateral trade which touched USD 19.4 billion during 2021-22.**
  - Malaysia is the third largest trading partner of India in the ASEAN region, after Singapore and Indonesia that account for USD 30.1 billion and USD 26.1 billion bilateral trade with India respectively.
- 
- ***What is the Significance of India's Move to Settle Trade in Indian Rupee?***
  - In July 2022, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allowed the **settlement of international trade in Indian rupees.**
  - In December 2022, **India saw its first settlement of foreign trade in rupee with Russia** – as part of the 'International Settlement of Trade in Indian Rupee' mechanism initiated by the RBI.
  - In March 2023, **banks from 18 countries were allowed by the RBI to open Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs)** to settle payments in Indian rupees.
  - **It includes:** Botswana, Fiji, Germany, Guyana, Israel, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, Myanmar, New Zealand, Oman, Russia, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Uganda, and the United Kingdom.

## DISSOLUTION OF NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR DEMOCRACY

- **Myanmar, also known as Burma, has been in political turmoil** since the military coup on February 1, 2021. The military junta, led by General Min Aung Hlaing, seized power and detained the country's elected leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, and other prominent figures.
- The military claimed voter fraud in the 2020 election, in which the **National League for Democracy (NLD) won by a landslide.**
- The coup sparked widespread protests and violence across the country, with the junta using brutal tactics to suppress dissent. **In the latest development, the military junta dissolved the NLD, the ruling party, last week.**
- ***The NLD's Dissolution and its Leader***
- The **NLD is the party founded by Aung San Suu Kyi, who won the Nobel Peace Prize** for her non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights in Myanmar.
- She has been under house arrest for many years and faced numerous legal challenges from the previous military regime. **The NLD won the 2020 election by a landslide,** but the military coup prevented them from taking power.
- On March 23, the military junta dissolved the NLD, citing alleged election fraud. **The move follows a new Political Party Registration Law** that requires all parties to re-register by March 28, or they would face dissolution.



## AZERBAIJAN & TAJIKISTAN DECLARED MALARIA FREE

- **Azerbaijan and Tajikistan were declared malaria-free by the WHO on March 29, 2023.** This came as the result of an extensive century-long campaign by the two nations to eradicate the disease.
- Malaria is a serious and life-threatening disease caused by the Plasmodium parasite and transmitted by the Anopheles mosquito.



- The declaration by the **WHO that Azerbaijan and Tajikistan are malaria-free** is a significant achievement for the two nations. They have eliminated the Anopheles mosquito-borne disease in their territories.
- To be certified as malaria-free by the WHO, a country must provide rigorous, **credible evidence showing that the malaria transmission cycle has been broken for at least the last three years.**
- In Tajikistan the last cases of regional **spread of Plasmodium vivax malaria were discovered in 2012. In Azerbaijan, it was last recorded in 2014.**

## UNITED NATIONS WATER CONFERENCE 2023

- Recently, the **United Nations held its first water conference in 46 years on March 22-24 in New York.** The conference coincided with the mid-term review of the International Decade for Action.
- The U.N. recognized that we are not doing enough to meet SDG 6, which aims to provide clean water and sanitation for everyone by 2030. The urgent need for action was demonstrated by a report "Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028."
- ***What is a Water Conference?***
- The water conference brings together people from different countries and organizations to work together on solving global water challenges.
- **Water problems are usually local,** but by working together, countries can learn from each other, share technology, and invest in solutions.
- The UN **2023 Water Conference's theme, "Our watershed moment: uniting the world for water,"** aimed to support the achievement of water-related global goals and objectives, including those enumerated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## GULF OF MANNAR MARINE NATIONAL PARK

- Located in the southernmost part of India, the **Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park (GoMMNP)** is a protected area covering an area of around 560 square kilometers.
- The park includes a **group of 21 islands situated in the Gulf of Mannar, Tamil Nadu**. The area was declared a marine national park in 1980 and later included in the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve (GoMBR) in 1989.
- The **vegetation in the GoMMNP is threatened by an invasive plant species called Prosopis chilensis**. This plant species is native to Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, and Peru.
- It is known for its ability to spread rapidly, forming dense thickets that can displace native plant species. **Another invasive plant species, Prosopis juliflora, was introduced in Tamil Nadu** by the British in 1877, which is equally threatening to the natural vegetation of the area.
- ***Bird Species in the Gulf of Mannar***
- A study conducted in the Gulf of Mannar recorded 96 bird species belonging to 13 orders. Out of these, 58 were waterbird species, indicating the importance of the area for these birds.
- The **highest number of waterbird species was recorded on Manoli island of the Kilakarai group**. Eight bird species were found on all the islands, including Kentish plover, ruddy turnstone, lesser black-backed gull, greater crested tern, little cormorant, great egret, Indian pond heron, and Brahminy kite.



## INDIA & SRILANKA BILATERAL MARITIME EXERCISE

- SLINEX-2023 is the 10th edition of the annual India-Sri Lanka Bilateral Maritime Exercise.
- The exercise is aimed at improving mutual understanding, enhancing interoperability, and exchanging best practices/procedures in multi-faceted maritime operations between both Navies.
- The exercise features two phases i.e., the Harbour Phase and the Sea Phase. **The Harbour Phase is being organized in Colombo, Sri Lanka** from April 3-5, followed by the Sea Phase from April 6-8, off Colombo.



- India and Sri Lanka have a long-standing bilateral relationship, particularly in the maritime domain. The cooperation **between the two nations has been robust, covering various areas such as political engagement, economic and commercial ties**, people-to-people connections, and cultural exchanges.
- The bilateral naval exercise, SLINEX-2023, is a testament to the strong ties between the two countries. **It aims to further enhance the cooperation between the two navies and reinforce** the shared values and bonds of friendship and camaraderie.

## WHAT IS COPE INDIA EXERCISE?

- India and the United States are set to conduct the **next edition of their bilateral air exercise called 'Cope India'**. This is aimed at enhancing the interoperability between the air forces of the two countries.
- The **air exercise will take place from April 10 to 21, 2023**, at the air force base in Kalaikunda, West Bengal. This will mark the first major air exercise between India and the US after a gap of five years.
- **Participants of the Exercise**
- The Indian Air Force will participate in the exercise with its **frontline fighters SU-30MKI, Rafale, and the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)**, among other elements. On the other hand, the US Air Force contingent will reportedly participate with its F-15 fighter jets.
- **Observer Nation**
- The air exercise will have Japan as an observer nation. **As per the Agreement of the Defence Ministers' Conference organized on August 20, 2018, the Japanese Air Self Defense Force (JASDF)** participated in Cope India for the first time in December 2018 as an observer. Japan's participation in the upcoming exercise is a part of a phased plan proposed by the US to make it a trilateral event.



## ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

### WHAT ARE THE IMF BAILOUTS?

- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** is an international organization **that provides financial assistance to member countries facing economic crises.**
- The organization works towards maintaining **international monetary cooperation, promoting exchange rate stability, and facilitating international trade.**
- IMF lending comes with strict conditions, and countries must adhere to these conditions to receive financial assistance.
- ***The Bailout Plan for Sri Lanka***
- Recently, the IMF approved a bailout plan for Sri Lanka worth nearly \$3 billion. **The plan includes immediate disbursement of \$333 million to alleviate the humanitarian crisis in the country.** This bailout comes as Sri Lanka struggles with economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- ***Negotiations with Pakistan***
- The **International Monetary Fund is negotiating with Pakistan to resume 1.1 billion USD** funding held since November since early February. To receive a bailout, Pakistan is required to fulfill commitments from friendly countries on external financing.
- ***Factors Leading to Economic Crises***
- According to the IMF website, economic crises occur due to inappropriate fiscal and monetary policies, exchange rates fixed at an inappropriate level, **a weak financial system, political instability, and weak institutions.**



### WHAT IS 'CPTPP' TRADE PACT?

- The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) is a trade pact that **originated from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)** after the United States withdrew in 2017.
- The agreement includes 11 countries, namely Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam.
- The CPTPP aims to enhance trade between member countries by reducing tariffs, improving market access, and promoting economic growth. On December 31, 2022, **Britain formally applied to join the CPTPP, which will make it the first European country to join the partnership.**
- With Britain's membership, the CPTPP will cover a market of 500 million people, accounting for approximately 15% of global GDP.



## IMF'S \$115 BILLION LOAN FOR UKRAINE

- The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** has approved a loan program worth \$15.6 billion for Ukraine as part of a larger \$115 billion package to aid its war-torn economy.
- With one-third of Ukraine's population displaced, the IMF's support **comes as a crucial aid in reconstructing the country's economy.**
- ***Two-Phase Loan Program for Ukraine***
- The IMF's loan program for Ukraine will span four years and run in two phases. **The first phase aims to close Ukraine's massive budget deficit and stabilize disinflation.**
- The IMF's support will ease the pressure on government spending by providing immediate financial assistance of \$2.7 billion. **Ukraine is required to focus on financial stability and undertake ambitious structural reforms, particularly in the energy sector.**



## FOREIGN TRADE POLICY 2023

- Recently, the **Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Textiles** launched the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023 which comes into effect from April 1, 2023.



- **FTP 2023 is a policy document** which is based on continuity of time-tested schemes facilitating exports as well as a document which is nimble and responsive to the requirements of trade.
- ***What are Details of FTP 2023?***
- The **policy is based on the principles of trust and partnership** with exporters and aims at process re-engineering and automation to facilitate ease of doing business for exporters.
- ***The Key Approach is based on Four Pillars:***
- **Incentive to Remission,**
  - Export promotion through collaboration - Exporters, States, Districts, Indian Missions,
  - Ease of doing business, reduction in transaction cost and e-initiatives, and
  - **Emerging Areas** – E-Commerce Developing Districts as Export Hubs and streamlining Special Chemicals, Organisms, Materials, Equipment, and Technologies (SCOMET) policy.



## IMPORTANT DATES & DAYS

### ODISHA DAY OR UTKAL DIWAS OBSERVED ON APRIL 1ST

- **Odisha Day or Utkal Divas is a significant day for the people of Odisha, India** as it marks the formation of the state on April 1, 1936. Every year on this day, the state celebrates with cultural programs, parades, and flag hoisting ceremonies.
- Odisha, also known as the **Land of Lord Jagannath**, is famous for its scenic seas and ancient temples, such as the Jagannath Puri Temple and the Sun Temple of Konark, which attract tourists.
- Odisha, also known as Orissa, is a state in eastern India with a rich history dating back to ancient times.
- The earliest evidence of **human habitation in the region dates back to the Stone Age**, with archaeological sites such as Golbai Sasan providing evidence of early settlements.
- In **the 3rd century BCE**, the region was ruled by the powerful emperor Ashoka, who is known for his conversion to **Buddhism and his role in spreading the religion across the Indian subcontinent**.
- Following **the decline of the Mauryan Empire**, the region came under the control of various dynasties, including the Satavahanas, the Ikshvakus, and the Kharavela of the Mahameghavahana dynasty.
- During the medieval period, **Odisha was ruled by various Hindu dynasties, including the Eastern Ganga dynasty**, which oversaw a period of cultural and artistic development.
- The state was also an important center for the spread of the Bhakti movement, with **saints such as Jayadeva and Ramanuja contributing to the development of the tradition**.
- In the 16th century, Odisha came under the control of the Mughal Empire, and later the British East India Company. The state played an important role in the Indian independence movement, with leaders such as **Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das, Gopabandhu Das, and Biju Patnaik contributing to the struggle for freedom**.



- **After India gained independence in 1947**, Odisha became a state on April 1, 1936, and has since emerged as a center for industry, agriculture, and tourism.
- The state has a rich cultural heritage, with a vibrant arts and crafts tradition, ancient temples, and festivals such as the **Rath Yatra in Puri attracting visitors from across the country** and around the world.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CONSCIENCE

- The International Day of Conscience is an annual worldwide awareness event celebrated on April 5th.
- It came into existence on July 25th, 2019, when the **United Nations General Assembly** passed a resolution entitled "Promoting the Culture of Peace with Love and Conscience" and designated April 5th as the International Day of Conscience.
- His **Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa**, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain, organized the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly, which passed the resolution.
- The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** Preamble mentions that disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts that have outraged the conscience of humankind.
- This highlights the significance of the International Day of Conscience to establish a culture of peace based on the **principles of freedom, justice, and democracy, all human rights, tolerance, and solidarity.**

## NATIONAL MARITIME DAY: APRIL 5TH

- On **April 5th, India celebrated National Maritime Day**, which commemorates the maiden voyage of the first Indian commercial vessel, the SS Loyalty, from Mumbai to London in 1919. **This year's theme was "Propelling Indian Maritime to Net Zero."**



- It was organized by the Directorate General of Shipping, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways in Mumbai and concluded with a ceremony at the Domestic Cruise Terminus in Mumbai Port Trust, highlighting the need for a coordinated and collaborative approach to achieve the net-zero targets in the maritime sector.
- The Government has acknowledged the contribution of seafarers during the pandemic and emphasized India's efforts to promote 'Ease of Doing Business' to reduce logistics costs and facilitate shipping to make India a pre-eminent player in the maritime sector.
- And the importance of academic partnerships with global maritime universities and enhancing the skills of Indian maritime institutes to achieve the goals of Maritime Vision 2030. During the program, **Sagar Samman Awards were awarded to the contributors to the growth of the Indian maritime industry.**

## SCIENCE & TECH.

### SKY CANVAS: ARTIFICIAL METEORS SHOWER

- **Recently, a Japanese company, ALE,** plans to launch satellites that will trigger an artificial meteor shower, called Sky Canvas in 2025.
- ***What is the Sky Canvas Project?***
- The Sky Canvas project aims to give people all over the world **“the opportunity to view the world’s first live human-made meteor shower.”**
- **ALE plans to use a pressure-driven system of gas tanks** that will shoot pellets at a speed of 8 kilometers per second to trigger the artificial meteor shower.
- The metal “shooting star” particles will be taken to a low-Earth orbit by small satellites. Once the orbit stabilizes, the **particles will be released, and they will travel around part of the planet before entering the atmosphere at an altitude of 60 to 80 kilometers.**
- The company also hopes to collect atmospheric data in the mesosphere (**the third layer of the atmosphere**) to further scientific understanding of climate change.

### WHAT IS UPWARD LIGHTNING?

- The phenomenon of upward lightning, also known as upward flashes, has **long been a fascinating sight for scientists and observers alike.**
- Recently, Brazilian researchers succeeded in capturing high-speed images of the event, showcasing a self-initiated lightning streak that develops from tall objects, traveling upward towards electrified storm clouds.
- ***Where Was Upward Lightning Captured?***





- The **research was conducted in São José dos Campos, a city northeast of São Paulo in Brazil.** The Brazilian researchers were successful in photographing the upward lightning with the help of high-speed video cameras, at very high resolution.
- ***Factors Enabling Upward Lightning***
  - For upward lightning to occur, storm electrification and a cloud charge region's presence are essential factors.
  - The vertical elevation of a tall object increases the electric field's local intensity on the ground, creating **favorable conditions for the initiation of an upward streak or leader from a tall object.**
  - It can also develop in response to an electric field change created by a nearby preceding lightning flash.
  - The Mesosphere is too low to be observed by satellites and too high for weather balloons or aircraft.

## AKASH WEAPON SYSTEM & ₹8,161 CRORE BDL CONTRACT

- **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) signed a contract worth ₹8,161 crore** with the Ministry of Defence for the production and supply of Akash Weapon System (AWS) for two regiments of the Indian Army.
- This Hyderabad-based defense **public sector unit is gearing up to meet the production demands of the weapon system**, which will be completed within three years.
- ***The Akash Weapon System***
  - The **Akash Weapon System (AWS)** is a mobile, surface-to-air missile system designed and developed by **the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).**
  - The missile can target aircraft up to 30 km away and engage targets at an altitude of up to 18 km. The system has advanced radar that can track multiple targets and can be launched from both



tracked and wheeled platforms. **The missile system has been inducted into the Indian Army and Indian Air Force.**

➤ ***Countermeasure Dispensing System***

- In addition to the contract for the Akash Weapon System, BDL received an order **worth ₹261 crore for CounterMeasure Dispensing System (CMDs), which protects aircraft from missiles.** This system deploys flares and chaffs to distract and decoy incoming missiles and has been installed on **various aircraft in the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy.**

## EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY'S (ESA) PROBA-3 MISSION

- The **European Space Agency's (ESA) Proba-3 mission**, consisting of two spacecraft, will demonstrate precision formation flying in space. It is set to revolutionize scientific observation and space applications.
- ***Mission Overview***
- **Proba-3 is an ambitious mission that aims to form a 144-m long solar coronagraph,** allowing scientists to study the Sun's faint corona closer to the solar rim than has ever before been achieved.
- Achieving precise formation flying opens up a whole new era for science and applications, **including Earth observation and in-orbit satellite servicing.**
- ***Mission Objectives***
- **Proba-3's primary goal is to validate strategies, guidance, navigation and control, and other algorithms in space.** Maintaining formation throughout the orbit is difficult due to high fuel costs. Therefore, each orbit will be divided between 6 hours of **formation flying maneuvers at apogee and the rest of the orbit in passive safe drifting.**

## MISCELLANEOUS

### KEY POINTS RELATED TO BANDIPUR TIGER RESERVE

- **Bandipur Tiger Reserve, located in Karnataka**, completed 50 years as a Project Tiger Reserve on April 1, 2023. The reserve was launched in 1973 by the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, with the aim to stop the decline in population of tigers.
- Initially, there were 12 tigers in Bandipur when Project Tiger was launched, as a result of protection measures, **there are currently 173 tigers using the area.**
- ***What are the Key Points of Bandipur Tiger Reserve?***
- **Bandipur Tiger Reserve lies in one of the richest biodiversity areas** of our country representing “Western Ghats Mountains Biogeography Zone”, surrounded by **Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu) in the South, Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary (Kerala) in the Southwest & on the North West Side the Kabini Reservoir** separates the Bandipur and Nagarahole Tiger Reserve.
- The reserve is recognized as one of the Mega Biodiversity Areas in the country and is home to rich floral and faunal diversity.
- Establishment: It was established in 1973 under Project Tiger. In 1985, by including adjacent areas from **Venugopala Wildlife Park, it was enlarged and named Bandipur National Park.**



### FIRST EVER ANTI-SPYWARE DECLARATION

- On March 30, **the US and 10 other nations issued the first-ever significant anti-spyware declaration.** It recognized the threat posed by the misuse of commercial spyware and seeks to realize the importance of stringent domestic and international controls on the proliferation and use of this technology.



- The declaration stated that Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Denmark, France, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States would take decisive steps to create robust guardrails and procedures within their respective systems.
- US President Joe Biden issued an executive order on March 29, **prohibiting the US federal government from using spyware.**
- This move came after several high-profile incidents, including the **Pegasus spyware scandal involving the Israeli company NSO Group.**
- Although Israel was not singled out in the anti-spyware declaration, the **NSO Group was frequently brought up in a media briefing** by a senior US administration official.

## KEY POINTS RELATED TO ERAVIKULAM NATIONAL PARK

- **Eravikulam National Park (ENP)** is a 97 km<sup>2</sup> national park located in the Idukki and Ernakulam districts of Kerala, India. Established in 1978, it is the first national park in the state.
- Administered by the Kerala Department of Forests and Wildlife, Munnar Wildlife Division, ENP is known for its rich biodiversity and is home to various endemic species.
- ***New Attraction in ENP***
- ENP has a new attraction – a Fernarium, which is the first of its kind in the hill station. The Fernarium is a collection of **ferns that have been planted inside the park.**

## WHO IS CHRISTINA HAMMOCK KOCH?

- In a significant moment for space exploration, astronaut Christina Hammock Koch has been **announced as the first woman to circle the Moon.**
- The US space agency, NASA, has declared that Koch will be the mission specialist when **four humans board the Orion spacecraft for a trip around the Moon.**





➤ ***Christina Koch – A Career Overview***

- **Christina Koch joined NASA in 2013** and has served as a flight engineer on the International Space Station (ISS) for Expeditions 59, 60, and 61. She holds Bachelor of Science degrees **in Electrical Engineering and Physics** and a **Master of Science degree in Electrical Engineering**, all from North Carolina State University.
- Before joining NASA, she worked as an Electrical Engineer at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC), **where she contributed to scientific instruments on several NASA space science missions.**
- Koch was first launched into space in 2019 on the Soyuz MS-12 spacecraft and has spent a total of 328 days in space, **conducting six spacewalks, including the first three all-women spacewalks.**
- ***Artemis II Mission: What is it all about?***
- The **announcement of Christina Koch's involvement in the mission has officially kicked off the preparation for the Artemis II mission**, which will bring humanity one step closer to landing on the Moon since the Apollo missions.

# THE HINDU DAILY ARTICLES' ANALYSIS BY SUCCESS MANTRA SMART COACHING

In this competitive world, the demand for "authentic Current Affairs updates" from a reliable source has been increasing for the past few years, with the growth of awareness and aspirants' educational goals.

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