

NEWS TODAY

SUCCESSFUL FLIGHT OF SMALL SATELLITE LAUNCH VEHICLE (SSLV) BY ISRO

- **Second developmental flight of SSLV — SSLV-D2 — placed three satellites** in its precise orbit.

➤ **Earlier, First test flight** of SSLV had **marginally missed** to place the satellites.

- **SSLV-D2 carried:**

- **EOS-07**, an **Earth Observation Satellite** by ISRO.
- **Janus-1**, a **technology demonstrator satellite** built by United States-based Antaris and its Indian partners.
- **AzaadiSAT-2 satellite**, a combined **effort of about 750 girl students across India** guided by Space Kidz India.

- **About SSLV**

- It is a **3 stage Launch Vehicle** configured with **three Solid Propulsion Stages** and **liquid propulsion** based Velocity Trimming Module as a terminal stage.
- It is **capable of launching Mini, Micro, or Nanosatellites** (10 to 500 kg mass) to a **500 km orbit**.
- Like Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and Geosynchronous Satellite Launch vehicle (GSLV), **SSLV can accommodate multiple satellites**, albeit smaller ones.
- Unlike PSLV and GSLV, SSLV **can be assembled both vertically and horizontally**.
- **Other features:** Low cost, low turn-around time, launch on demand feasibility, minimal launch infrastructure requirements etc.
- **NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)**, under Department of Space and commercial arm of ISRO, is the **sole nodal agency responsible for providing end-to-end SSLV Launch services** for customer satellites.



SUPREME COURT (SC) ON MARKETS: NEED TO PROTECT INVESTORS, STEP UP REGULATION

- **In the backdrop of stock manipulation charges** on a business conglomerate, **Supreme Court (SC)** asked SEBI and government to **produce the existing regulatory framework in place to protect Indian investors**.
- SC also stated that **stock market is no longer a place for just high value investors** and has seen **rising presence of middle-class** and **called for forming a panel of experts** in banking and securities along with a former judge.
- **Stock market is regulated by SEBI under the SEBI Act 1992** with the prime mandate to **protect interest of investors in securities**.

- **Initiatives taken for investor protection**

➤ **By SEBI**

- **Enhanced disclosure norms for IPO** bounds companies.
- Framework for **preventing insiders trading**.
- **New framework for credit rating agencies**.
- **Allowed T+1 settlement** for shorter trade settlement cycle.
- **SCORES** a web-based **centralized grievance redress system**.

➤ **Others**

- **Investor Education and Protection Fund** under Companies Act, 1956 which is funded by unclaimed funds on account of dividends, matured deposits, etc

SEBI'S FOUR PRONGED INVESTOR PROTECTION STRATEGY

Build the capacity of investors through education and awareness

Make available every **detail relevant for investment in public domain**

Ensure that the market has systems and practices which make transactions safe

Facilitate **redressal of investor grievances**

USIBC PARTICIPATED IN INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK (IPEF) STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSIONS

- US India Business Council (USIBC), **premier business advocacy organization**, aims to create an **inclusive bilateral trade environment** between India and US.
- IPEF is a **U.S.-led economic grouping** comprising 14 partners (**including India**) which represent **40% of global GDP** and **28% of global goods and services trade**.
 - **Based on 4 pillars:** Trade; Supply Chains; Clean Energy, Decarbonization, and Infrastructure; and Tax and Anti-Corruption.
 - IPEF partners are **not required to join all four pillars**.
- During discussions, **USIBC also focused** on plans to promote a **free, open, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region**.
 - Indo-Pacific is a **geopolitical construct which represents** an integrated theatre that combines **Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean, and land masses that surround them**.
 - Indo-Pacific **represents about 60% of World's GDP**, dominates **almost 50% of world's maritime trade** and is **rich in natural resources**.
- **India's Interest in Indo-Pacific**
 - **Peace and Security** in Indian Ocean.
 - **Expanding presence in the region** especially Africa, Middle East and Southeast Asia.
 - Maintaining its role as **net security provider and countering China**.
 - **Others:** Combating marine pollution, deep sea mineral exploration, regulating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing etc.

STUDY WEBS OF ACTIVE LEARNING FOR YOUNG ASPIRING MINDS (SWAYAM) TOPS OTHER E-LEARNING PLATFORMS

- With **2.4 crore enrolments**, government-run **SWAYAM has outperformed any other e-Learning platform**.
 - SWAYAM is a **repository of more than 300 high quality Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC)** that are developed by **academicians from top ranked institutions** and are offered **free of cost**.
- A learning system **based on formalised teaching but with help of electronic resources** is known as E-learning.
 - India is **one of the biggest market** for e-learning with **revenue projected to reach US\$ 4.73bn in 2023**.
- **Factors driving eLearning platform**
 - **COVID-19 pandemic** has accelerated adoption of online learning.
 - Demand for **remote and flexible** learning options.
 - **Advancements in technology** and growing trend towards **personalized and adaptive learning**.
- **Challenges faced:** Ensuring **quality and accuracy** of content, **Digital divide, unequal access** to technology and internet connectivity etc.
- **Key initiatives to promote e-learning**
 - **E-Pathshala:** Provides **E-textbooks** with 3500+ curriculum content in English, Urdu and Hindi.
 - **Education 4.0 India initiative:** To address learning gaps and make education accessible to all.
 - **PM eVIDYA:** It unifies all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education.
 - **DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing):** To offer school curriculum-based engaging learning materials to students, teachers, and parents.



PRIVILEGES AND POWERS OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT (MPs)

- **Protesting against expunction of parts of his speech**, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha **cited Article 105** arguing that MPs have freedom of speech.
- Article 105 **deals with "powers, privileges, etc of Houses of Parliament** and of members and committees thereof".
 - They are necessary **to secure independence and effectiveness of their actions**.
 - **Without these privileges, Houses can neither maintain their authority, dignity and honour nor can protect their members from any obstruction** in discharge of their parliamentary responsibilities.
- Parliamentary privileges **can be classified into two broad categories:** those **enjoyed by each House collectively** and those **enjoyed by members individually**.
 - **Parliament has not made any special law** to exhaustively codify all privileges.
- These rights are **also given to those individuals who speak and participate in any committee of Parliament**, which includes **Attorney General of India and Union Ministers**.
 - However, parliamentary privileges **do not extend to President**.
- **Supreme Court** in *Tej Kiran Jain v N Sanjiva Reddy (1970)* and *P V Narasimha Rao vs. State case (1998)* **gave a wider ambit to protection accorded under Article 105**.

WTO: INDIA MOOTS ALTERNATIVE PARADIGM ON CONSUMER PROTECTION IN E-COMMERCE, DIGITAL PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE (DPI)

- India has submitted two papers on e-commerce to push for broader discussions on rule-making in e-commerce.
 - Discussions are **currently dominated by a group of countries in a plurilateral mode** (includes some but not all WTO members).
 - India has argued that since e-commerce sector has **implications on developing and poor nations**, it should be discussed in a **multilateral setting**.
- In 1998, **WTO established work programme on e-commerce** to comprehensively **examine all trade-related issues** relating to this.
 - It instructed **WTO bodies** (including Council on Trade in Goods, Council on Trade in Services etc) to **explore** relationship between **existing WTO agreements and e-commerce**.
 - It also **agreed for a moratorium on e-commerce** which entails that members **should not impose customs duties on electronic transmissions** (encompasses software, emails, digital music, movies, videogames etc).
- Two papers submitted by India:
 - Consumer protection paper:** emphasised on need to jointly address several new challenges and issues relating to misleading advertising, online payment security, data protection, dispute resolution etc.
 - DPI paper:** outlined key challenges which limit adoption of e-commerce and presented an approach to overcome the challenge of digital divide.

ALSO IN NEWS



Judicial Review

- Supreme Court (SC) stated that **suitability of a candidate cleared by Collegium** for appointment as a judge **cannot be a subject of judicial review**.
- Judicial review is a **type of court proceeding** in which a **judge reviews the lawfulness of a decision or action** made by a public body.
 - Article 13 expressly provides** for doctrine of judicial review.
- Scope of judicial review power of SC in India is narrower** than that of what exists in US.
 - American Constitution provides for 'due process of law'** against that of **'procedure established by law'** in Indian Constitution.



Bar Council of India (BCI)

- Supreme Court affirmed BCI's power to hold All India Bar Examination**, a test that a lawyer has to qualify to **practise law in courts of country**.
- BCI was established** by Parliament under **Advocates Act, 1961** to **regulate and represent Indian bar**.
- Statutory functions of BCI include:**
 - To lay down **standards of professional conduct and etiquette** for advocates.
 - To safeguard **rights, privileges and interests** of advocates.
 - To recognise Universities whose degree in law shall be a **qualification for enrolment as an advocate**.










India-ASEAN Digital Work Plan 2023

- Work Plan was approved** at the 3rd **ASEAN Digital Ministers meeting**.
- Work Plan includes capacity **building and knowledge sharing in emerging areas in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)** such as AI in Cyber Security.
- It will **strengthen collaboration between India and ASEAN in ICT**.
 - Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) includes 10 members:** Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, Brunei Darussalam, Viet Nam, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Cambodia.



Urban 20 (U20)

- U20 City Sherpa Meeting held** in Ahmedabad (Gujrat).
- U20, an Engagement Group** under G20, **brings together city sherpas, mayors** etc. from cities in G20 countries to **collectively deliberate key urban challenges**.
- Priority areas included in recent U20 meeting:** Encouraging environmentally responsible behaviours, Ensuring water security, Accelerating climate finance, Championing 'local' identity etc.

 RBI updates Alert List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RBI issued Alert List of entities to curb unauthorised forex trading. • Alert List has entities which are neither authorised to deal in forex under Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA) nor authorised to operate Electronic Trading Platforms (ETPs) for forex transactions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Under FEMA, RBI is empowered to authorise any person to deal in foreign exchange as an authorised dealer or money changer.
 Market Access Initiative (MAI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet (upnext India 2023) was organised under MAI Scheme. • About MAI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is an Export Promotion Scheme (Ministry of Commerce and Industry) envisaged to act as a catalyst to promote India's exports on a sustained basis. ➤ It provides assistance for enhancement of exports through accessing new markets or through increasing share in existing market. ➤ Eligible Agencies are Departments of Central Government and Organisation of Central/State Governments including Indian Missions abroad, Export Promotion Councils etc.
 TARKASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is joint Indo-US exercise between National Security Guard (NSG) and US Special Operations Forces. • For the first time, this exercised simulated a validation exercise for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) terror response mission.
 Inclusive Forum on Carbon Mitigation Approaches (IFCMA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaugural meeting of IFCMA (India also participated) was held recently. • IFCMA is a new forum by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). • IFCMA aims to help improve global impact of emissions reduction efforts through better data and information sharing, evidence-based mutual learning etc. • Objective of IFCMA is to take stock of mitigation policy instruments that countries use to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and estimate emissions that these instruments relate to. • It will also develop a methodology to assess effects of mitigation policies on emission reductions at the country level.
 Lymphatic Filariasis (LF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recently, Mass Drug Administration (MDA) was launched by Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to eliminate LF by 2027, three years ahead of the global target. • LF or elephantiasis, is a neglected tropical disease. Infection is usually acquired in childhood causing hidden damage to the lymphatic system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Symptoms: Abnormal enlargement of body parts. ➤ Caused by: Nematodes (roundworms) of family Filariodidea. ➤ Transmitted by: Mosquitoes including Culex, Anopheles and Aedes. ➤ Global initiative: Global Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis by the WHO.
 Places in News	<div> <div> Mongolia (Capital: Ulaanbaatar) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11th meeting of India-Mongolia Joint Working Group was held. • Also known as "Land of the Eternal Blue Sky" and as "Land of the Horse". • Political boundaries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is a landlocked East Asian Country surrounded by Russia in the North and China in South. • Geographical features <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Terrain: Vast semidesert and desert plains, grassy steppe, mountains in west and southwest; Gobi Desert in south-central. ➤ Highest Point: Nayramadlin Orgil ➤ Lowest Point: Hoh Nuur ➤ Longest River: Orkhon River </div>  </div>