

**IACE**

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

**20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023**

**DESCRIPTIVE**

## ❖ Russia's LUNA 25 crashes into the moon

- Russia's lunar lander mission, Luna 25, which aimed to land near the lunar south pole at the Boguslawsky crater, crashed on the Moon's surface during de-orbiting due to technical glitches.
- The mission was launched on August 10, 2023, atop a Soyuz-2.1b rocket from the Vostochny Cosmodrome.
- The intended landing date was August 21, but on August 19, an "abnormal situation" was declared after an unsuccessful engine burn command, and on August 20, Roscosmos confirmed that the lander crashed.
- Luna 25 was the first lunar probe sent by Russia's space agency Roscosmos and would have been the first to land on the lunar south pole.
- This was Russia's first moon mission in 47 years that failed, underscoring the decline of the country's space power since the days of the Cold war era.
- Russia's \$2 trillion (roughly Rs. 1,66,18,000 crore) economy faces its biggest external challenge for decades by bearing the pressure of both Western sanctions and fighting the biggest land war in Europe since World War II.

### ❖ Banasthali Vidyapith gets Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana award

- The 25th Rajiv Gandhi National Sadbhavana Award was conferred to Banasthali Vidyapith in Rajasthan, a prestigious institute educating girls and women, for its tireless efforts in promoting peace, communal harmony, and national unity.
- Former vice president M Hamid Ansari conferred the award for the year 2020-21, in the presence of Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Mallikarjun Kharge.
- The award was handed over to Siddhartha Shastri of the institution .
- The award was first instituted in 1992 to mark the golden jubilee of the Quit India Movement and is given to an individual or institution for special contribution towards peace, communal harmony and national unity, and carries a cash reward of Rs 10 lakh and a citation.

### ❖ ICC unveiled mascots for men's cricket world cup 2023

- The International Cricket Council introduced the mascots for the 2023 Cricket World Cup.
- The two characters who represent distinct qualities that emerge as symbols of gender equality and diversity, were unveiled at an event in the presence of the Under-19 women's and men's winning captains Shafali Verma and Yash Dhull.
- The two characters were dressed in futuristic suits and hails from Crictoverse, according to an ICC press release.

### ❖ International day of remembrance of terrorism victims – August 21

- The United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution 72/165 (2017), established 21 August as the International Day of Remembrance of and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism.
- The day was chosen to commemorate the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq, on August 21, 2003, which killed 22 people, including Sergio Vieira de Mello, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

➤ It was proclaimed to honour and support the victims and survivors of terrorism and to promote and protect the full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

#### ❖ **Sadbhavana Diwas –August 20**

➤ Sadbhavana Diwas/Harmony Day is celebrated on August 20 every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi.

➤ Sadbhavana Diwas day is celebrated to promote national unity, peace, empathy, and communal harmony amid Indians of all faiths.

➤ In English, 'Sadbhavana' translates to 'goodwill.'

➤ In 1992, a year after Rajiv Gandhi's death, Congress instituted the Rajiv Gandhi Sadbhavana Award.

➤ Sadbhavana Diwas is also related to the maintenance of greenery, beauty of nature, environmental protection, and biodiversity conservation.

➤ This year marks the 78th birth anniversary of Rajiv Gandhi. He was only 40 years old when he assumed the post of Prime Minister.

➤ He was assassinated by members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), a separatist organization from Sri Lanka, during a public event in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu in May 1991.

#### ❖ **World Mosquito Day – August 20**

➤ World Mosquito Day, observed annually on 20 August, is a commemoration of British doctor Sir Ronald Ross's discovery in 1897 that female anopheline mosquitoes transmit malaria between humans.

➤ He was honored with the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1902.

➤ As per the analysis of World Health Organization, Malaria is the only disease that leads to around 400,000 deaths approximately every year.

- Mosquitoes are effectively responsible for around one million deaths every year.
- Some of the deadliest diseases caused by the infectious mosquitoes are dengue, yellow fever, elephantiasis, zika, malaria and more.
- Our earth consist of around 3,000 species of mosquitoes that are harmless.
- Female mosquitoes feed bloods of human during their time of breeding. They do so to intake protein.
- World Mosquito Day 2023 was themed as “Fighting the World's Deadliest Killer – the Mosquito”.

#### ❖ Srinagar's Tulip Garden enters World Book of Records

- The Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, located at the foothills of the beautiful Zabarwan Range, earned recognition in the World Book of Records as the largest and most stunning park of its kind in Asia.
- The garden features an impressive array of 1.5 million flowers in bloom, a remarkable testament to the beauty and diversity of the natural world.
- Diverse Tulip Collection: With a collection of 68 distinct varieties of tulips, the Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden is a spectacle of colors and shapes. Each tulip variety brings its own unique character, with shades ranging from delicate pastels to vibrant, eye-catching colors.
- Efforts of the Gardeners and Botanists: The careful selection of flowers in the garden highlights the dedicated work of the gardeners and botanists who have worked tirelessly to develop this breath taking display of nature's wonders.

### ❖ FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 winner - Spain

- Spain won the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 final by defeating England, at the Accor Stadium in Sydney.
- Spanish captain Olga Carmona's first-half goal proved to be the difference maker as her side kept hold of the lead.
- Meanwhile, England came closest in the first-half when Lauren Hemp was denied by the woodwork.
- The Spanish team has a tournament-best 18 goals in this World Cup.
- With this win, Spain also became the only second nation to clinch both the men's and the women's World Cups after Germany.

### ❖ China launched military exercises of the navy and air force around Taiwan

- China launched military exercises of the navy and air force around Taiwan.
- This response came as a warning after Vice President of Taiwan, William Lai's visit to the United States.
- Lai is also the front-runner to be Taiwan's next president in elections.
- The People's Liberation Army of China said that it was carrying out joint naval and air combat readiness patrols around the island and these exercises are being held to test the preparedness of its army.

### IIT Delhi partners with Wipro to get its own centre for generative AI

- Wipro has launched a new Center of Excellence on Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi.
- The partnership underscores Wipro's commitment to driving ongoing innovation in emerging technologies and is part of the company's \$1 billion commitment to accelerating AI-led innovation as part of the Wipro ai360 ecosystem.

➤ The Wipro CoE on Generative AI is anchored within the Yardi School of Artificial Intelligence (ScAI) at IIT Delhi, and will support foundational and applied research, nurture talent, and expand the state of the art in this critical field.

➤ The CoE will serve as an R&D hub, bringing together Wipro researchers with ScAI faculty members and graduate students to address at-scale real-world problems. Wipro CoE teams will jointly work on building innovative solutions using AI, ML (machine learning), and other technologies.

❖ **Maharashtra Government launches 'Birsa Munda Jodaraste Scheme'**

➤ The Maharashtra Cabinet announced the implementation of Bhagwan Birsa Munda Road Scheme that aims to enhance road connectivity in tribal areas of the 17 districts of the state.

➤ This project is going to be around 5 thousand crore rupees. A total length of 6838 km of roads will be constructed.

➤ There will be a separate committee of the tribal development department for these roads. The Public Works Department will build these roads.

➤ Under this scheme, a program will be undertaken to connect all the tribal places to the perennial main road, to perennialize all the eight-month roads in the tribal sub-plan area and to connect all the primary health centers and ashram shalas in the tribal sub-plan area to the main road.

➤ Birsa Munda known as Dharti Aaba (Father of Earth) was born in 1875 in Munda Tribe of Jharkhand. He is a freedom fighter and mobilized tribes against the Britisher to recognize their land rights.

### ❖ Trinidad & Tobago inks pact for sharing Indian Technology Stack

- Trinidad and Tobago has signed an agreement with the Indian government for sharing the Indian Stack, which is a collection of open application programming interfaces and digital public goods for identity, data and payment services.
- The agreement was signed in the presence of officials from the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), National E-Governance Division, and the Ministry of External Affairs, according to an official release.
- The two nations agreed to cooperate for digital transformation through capacity building, training programmes, exchange of best practices, exchange of knowledge between public officials and experts, development of pilot or demo solutions.

### ❖ Matti banana variety granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag

- The Matti banana variety, native to the Kanniyakumari district was granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- It is known for its unique characteristics that thrive only in the specific climate and soil conditions of its native region.
- The Matti banana flourishes due to the area's special conditions, producing a slightly larger-than-human finger-sized fruit with a sweet fragrance and honey-like taste that can't be replicated elsewhere.
- There are six known types of Matti bananas, each with unique attributes like colour, aroma, and taste.
- Nal Matti boasts a yellowish-orange colour and fine aroma, while Theyn [honey] Matti's pulp tastes like honey.
- Kal Matti gets its name from the calcium oxalate crystals forming in its pulp and black dots on the skin.

➤ Nei Matti exudes the aroma of ghee, and Sundari Matti, a Matti clone, with its elongated fingers, thick peel, and creamy white rind, is facing extinction.

➤ A hybrid, Semmati, is a mix of Matti and Red banana, possessing qualities beneficial for child growth and even suitable for diabetics.

❖ **Center imposed 40% export duty on onions**

➤ The government on Saturday imposed an export duty of 40% on onions with immediate effect to check price rise and improve supplies in the domestic market.

➤ This export duty is valid till December 31, 2023.

➤ The latest decision to impose export duty will result in a fall in prices of onion in the domestic market.

➤ The move to impose the duty was to avoid a price rise similar to that of tomatoes, according to Bharati Pawar, junior health and family welfare minister at the Centre.

➤ The Centre enhanced the buffer stock of onion from three lakh tonnes to five lakh tonnes.

Kamlesh Varshney, Amarjeet Singh appointed SEBI whole-time members

➤ The Central Government has appointed Shri Kamlesh Chandra Varshney, IRS, Joint Secretary, Department of Revenue, Government of India and Shri Amarjeet Singh, Executive Director, as Whole-Time Members of SEBI, for a period of 3 years from the date of assumption of charge of the post, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

➤ This appointment is made pursuant to section 4 of the SEBI Act, 1992 read with Rule 3 of the SEBI (Terms and Conditions of Service of Chairman and Members) Rules.

❖ **India wins mixed team air pistol gold in ISSF World Championship 2023, Baku**

➤ The Indian mixed 10m air pistol team of Shiva Narwal and Esha Singh won the gold medal at the ISSF World Championship 2023 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

➤ Esha Singh, 18, and 17-year-old Shiva Narwal defeated the Turkish team of Seval Ilayda Tarhan and Yusuf Dikec 16-10 in the gold medal match to top the podium.

➤ This was India's second medal at the Baku world championships after the men's 10m air pistol shooting team's bronze.

❖ **NLC India inks pact to supply 300 MW solar power to Rajasthan**

➤ NLC India has entered into a long-term power usage agreement with Rajasthan Urja Vikas Nigam Limited to supply 300 MW of solar power under the CPSU Scheme in Rajasthan.

➤ NLCIL is presently having 1,421 MW of Renewable Energy Capacity. As per its corporate plan, it contemplates establishing 6,031 MW capacity by 2030.

➤ The 300 MW solar project capacity is under execution at Barsingsar, Bikaner District, Rajasthan.