

IACE

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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❖ NASA, ESA to support moon landing of Chandrayaan 3

- National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and European Space Agency (ESA), have been continuously lending support to ISRO in tracking the spacecraft during its 3.84 lakh km journey to the Moon from the Earth.
- This partnership will play a key role in communicating with the lander module during the final descent phase.
- NASA has a Deep Space Network comprising an array of giant radio antennas situated at different corners of the world and ESA has its own international satellite tracking network called Estrack.
- Estrack is a global system of ground stations providing link between satellites in orbit and the European Space Operations Centre (ESOC), Darmstadt, Germany.
- ESA will support the lander during the entire phase of lunar surface operations, helping to ensure that science data acquired by the rover arrives safely with ISRO in India.
- ISRO operates a 32-meter deep space tracking station in Byalalu, a little known village in Karnataka, that enables it to locate, track, command and receive telemetry and scientific data from its distant spacecraft.
- Support from other space agencies comes in handy when ISRO's operators need to track or command a spacecraft when it is outside the field of view of this antenna.

➤ Building new giant antennas and control stations around the world is very expensive. So, like many space agencies and commercial companies across the globe, ISRO is also seeking the support of NASA and ESA to remain connected with the Chandrayaan-3 at all times.

❖ **IREDA signs MoU with Government of India**

➤ The Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), a prominent Mini Ratna (Category – I) government enterprise operating under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, has entered a performance-oriented Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Government's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.

➤ The MoU is aligned with the guidelines stipulated by the Department of Public Enterprises under the Ministry of Finance. It outlines IREDA's strategic objectives for the fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25.

➤ As per the MoU, the Indian Government has set ambitious Revenue from Operations targets for IREDA, amounting to ₹4,350 crores for the financial year 2023-24 and ₹5,220 crores for 2024-25.

➤ The MoU also highlights several crucial performance indicators, including Return on Net Worth, Return on Capital Employed, NPA to Total Loans Ratio, Asset Turnover Ratio, and Earnings per Share.

➤ The MoU was signed by Shri Bhupinder Singh Bhalla, Secretary of MNRE, and Shri Pradip Kumar Das, Chairperson & Managing Director of IREDA.

❖ NHPC signs MoU with RITES for Dibang Multipurpose Project in Arunachal Pradesh

- National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) has inked an initial pact with Rail India Technical and Economic Service (RITES) to construct railway siding for a 2,880 MW Dibang multipurpose project in Arunachal Pradesh.
- The agreement was signed by General Manager (Civil) Dibang and Executive Director, RITES, in the presence of Biswajit Basu, Director (Projects) NHPC at corporate office of NHPC.
- NHPC's total installed capacity is 7,097.2 MW of renewable power (including wind and solar) through its 25 power stations, including 1,520 MW through its subsidiary.
- RITES Ltd is a leading player in the transport consultancy and engineering sector in India, having diversified services across sectors and geographical reach.
- The strategic partnership between NHPC and RITES complements the expertise of both organisations.
- Leveraging its core strength, RITES, as a Project Management Consultant, will provide comprehensive and efficient solutions for developing rail infrastructure facilities for NHPC Dibang and other upcoming projects in Arunachal Pradesh.

❖ Union Minister Jitendra Singh launches the CSIR Prima ET11, the first indigenous e-Tractor

➤ Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh launches the CSIR Prima ET11, the first indigenous e-Tractor developed by the Central Mechanical Engineering Research Institute (CMERI), Durgapur.

➤ He gave the mantra of 5 S's, - Showcasing, Stakeholders, Startups, Synergizing and Strategizing Industry linkage, for the success of CSIR R&D.

➤ The first indigenous e-Tractor underlined the role of Agri StartUps in India's economy and called for the adoption of new and AI driven technologies in agriculture.

➤ New Startups are venturing into the agriculture sector, focusing on niche technologies including e-Tractor, recycling garbage, drip irrigation, Genome sequenced farming such as Mango and Lotus.

➤ Dr Jitendra Singh released a book by CSIR-CIMAP and a compendium on 75 technologies developed by CSIR.

➤ The CSIR-CMERI will be celebrating the theme-based campaign "One Week One Lab" from 11-15 September 2023, showcasing the laboratory's cutting-edge research, products and technologies, expertise and facilities to various stakeholders.

❖ **First Foreign Office Consultations between India and Samoa held in Apia**

- The 1st Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between India and Samoa was held in Apia.
- Both the countries discussed their wide-ranging bilateral relations including their development partnership covering areas such as health, Information and Communications Technology ICT, Education, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises SME, and capacity building.
- They also discussed follow-up on Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation FIPIC III Summit, as well as regional and global issues, and cooperation in the Commonwealth, and United Nations.
- Island country in the central South Pacific Ocean, Samoa will host the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting CHOGM on 21st of October next year.

❖ **Madhya Pradesh launched 'Mukhyamantri Seekho-Kamao Yojna' scheme**

- Chief Minister of Madhya Pradaesh, Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the 'Mukhyamantri Seekho-Kamao Yojana' which means 'Chief Minister's Learn-Earn' scheme.
- The scheme has facilitated on-the-job training on the lines of 'learn and earn along with skill development and is targeted to include one lakh youth in the first phase of this scheme.
- This scheme has been started for the youth in the age group of 18 to 29 years. Under the scheme, the selected youth will be given training according to the requirements of the industries and also get an 8 to 10 thousand rupees stipend.

❖ Saudi Arabia Launches AI-powered program to combat desertification

- The Saudi Arabia's, Environment Ministry has launched a program to combat desertification using artificial intelligence (AI).
- The program, which is a collaboration between the ministry, the National Center for Vegetation Development and Combating Desertification, and the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, aims to study the status of vegetative cover in the country and contribute to the goals of afforestation projects and the "Green Saudi" initiative.
- The program will use AI to analyze satellite imagery and other data to identify areas that are most vulnerable to desertification.
- Remote sensing technologies will be used to monitor vegetation cover, rainfall, plant health and track its changes over time.
- The program will also develop strategies to mitigate the effects of desertification, such as planting trees and shrubs, improving water management, and promoting sustainable agriculture.
- The "Green Saudi" initiative aims to plant 10 billion trees across the country, covering 30 percent of total land area. In addition it aims to create vast protected zones, conserve marine life around the coasts and encourage alternative forms of agriculture.
- The "National Center for Vegetation Development and Combating Desertification", is working to develop drought-resistant plants and improve water management practices.

❖ Adobe co-founder John Warnock passes away at 82

➤ John Warnock, who helped invent the PDF and co-founder of Adobe Systems, has passed away at the age of 82 years.

➤ His brilliance and innovations left an indelible mark on Adobe, the technology industry and the world.

➤ He earned an undergraduate in math and doctorate in electrical engineering, or computer science, from the University of Utah and maintained close ties with his home state after he retired as CEO of Adobe.

❖ Canara Bank launches UPI Interoperable Digital Rupee mobile application

➤ Canara Bank launched the UPI Interoperable Digital Rupee mobile application as a part of the Reserve Bank of India's Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) pilot project.

➤ It is the first bank in both the public and commercial sectors to offer this feature via its CBDC mobile app called the Canara Digital Rupee app.

➤ With the introduction of this feature, customers can scan merchant UPI QR codes using the Canara Digital Rupee app and pay through digital currency.

➤ This application is available for Android and iOS users, enabling customers to conveniently transact in digital currency.

➤ Managing Director and CEO of Canara Bank : K. Satyanarayana Raju

❖ Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport becomes the first in northeast to get 'Digi Yatra' facility

- Guwahati's Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport became the first airport in the northeast to get 'Digi Yatra' facility.
- Digi Yatra uses facial recognition technology to provide a seamless and hassle-free experience to passengers at airports. The aim of Digi Yatra facility is to eliminate the need for verification of tickets and IDs at various touch points.
- This facility is currently available only for Indigo and Akasa passengers at Guwahati airport and is available in three major areas of the airport, namely - first entrance, check-in and boarding areas.

❖ Viacom18 appointed Kiran Mani as CEO of digital business

- Viacom18, a prominent player in the media and entertainment sector, has appointed Google's Kiran Mani as CEO overseeing digital business operations.
- At present, Kiran Mani holds the position of General Manager and MD for Android and Google Play in the Asia Pacific region at Google.
- In his role as the head of the digital business, he will have the responsibility of leading the expansion of JioCinema, according to the sources.
- In the past, Disney Star's Kevin Vaz joined Viacom18 as CEO of TV and digital (regional entertainment). Alok Jain, another former Disney Star executive, has also joined Viacom18 as President and Head of Colors Hindi and Regional.

❖ **Raja Anirudh Sriram bags silver at Singapore Math Olympiad**

- Raja Anirudh Sriram, a student in the fourth standard from Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, won a silver medal at the Singapore Math Olympiad, highlighting the global competitiveness of Indian students.
- The event, which had a participation of over 2000 students from 32 different countries, was a platform for young mathematical minds to showcase their skills and knowledge.
- This achievement can inspire aspiring civil servants, teachers, police officers, and other government job aspirants to strive for excellence.
- At the age of four, he etched his name into the India Book of Records by identifying an astonishing 100 cars in just 160 seconds, showcasing an exceptional memory and attention to detail.
- He became the youngest Indian to earn the coveted 'Microsoft Office Specialist Certificate,' a testament to his computational skills and technological aptitude.

❖ **India participates in 20th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers' Meeting in Semarang, Indonesia**

- Shri Rajesh Agrawal, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry represented India in the 20th ASEAN-India Economic Ministers' meeting held on 21st August 2023 in Semarang, Indonesia and co-chaired the meeting with Dr. Zulkifli Hasan, Minister of Trade, Indonesia.
- The Ministers reviewed the bilateral trade and investment relations between India and ASEAN and underscored their commitment to strengthen and enhance the economic partnership between India and ASEAN to ensure that the ASEAN-India

Comprehensive Strategic Partnership delivers meaningful benefits for both sides, particularly in the post-pandemic era.

- India and ASEAN registered a bilateral trade of USD 131.5 billion in 2022-23. The trade with ASEAN accounted for 11.3% of India's global trade in 2022-23.
- The main agenda of this year's meeting was the timely review of ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) which was signed in 2009.

❖ IIT-H, DQGA sign MoU for M.Tech certificate program

- The Indian Institute of Technology-Hyderabad, and the Directorate General of Quality Assurance (DGQA) of the Union Ministry of Defense have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to offer M.Tech, Executive M.Tech and certificate programmes in various disciplines.
- IIT-H director Prof BS Murthy and Officiating Director of DGQA RA Goverdhan signed the MoU at the IIT-H Campus in Kandi, Medak district.
- According to the pact, the two institutes will offer M.Tech and certificate courses in Software Engineering, Testing and Artificial intelligence, Quality Management, Data Sciences, Micro Electronics and VLSI, Communications and Signal Processing, Integrated Computational Material Engineering, EV Technologies, Smart Mobility.