



# CURRENT AFFAIRS

≡ 13 JANUARY, 2022 ≡

## 1. 11 New Government Medical Colleges

### Why in news?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated 11 New Government Medical Colleges across Tamil Nadu and the new campus of Central Institute of Classical Tamil in Chennai via video conferencing.
- The new campus of Central Institute of Classical Tamil is fully funded by the Union Government. It is built at a cost of 24 Crore rupees.
- The Institute which was operating from a rented building so far, will now operate from a new 3 storey campus.
- The new campus is equipped with a spacious library, an e-library, seminar halls and a multimedia hall.
- It will provide an efficient working environment for the institute in its pursuit of promoting classical

Tamil across the world.

## 2. Gaganyaan programme

### Why in news?

- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully conducted qualification tests of the Cryogenic Engine for Gaganyaan human space programme.
- The ISRO Propulsion Complex in Tamil Nadu conducted the test for 720 seconds duration and met the test objectives.
- The engine parameters were closely matching with the predictions during the entire duration of the test.
- The successful test has ensured the reliability and robustness of the cryogenic engine for induction into the human rated launch vehicle for Gaganyaan.
- The engine will further undergo four more tests for a cumulative duration of 1810 seconds.

- The Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) Mark III launch vehicle to be used for the Gaganyaan programme will use two cryogenic engines. This engine developed by ISRO is named as Vikas.

### Significance:

- This successful long duration test is a major milestone for the Human Space programme Gaganyaan.
- The success of Vikas engine signals a great breakthrough in the Indian manned mission to outer space.

### 3. New chairman of ISRO

#### News?

Eminent rocket scientist S Somanath has been appointed the new chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) as well as the Space Secretary.

#### About:

- He will succeed K Sivan who completes his extended tenure as ISRO chief tomorrow.
- His appointment as the Space Secretary and the Space Commission Chairman is for a combined

tenure of three years from the date of joining of the post.

- The post of the ISRO chairman, the Space Secretary and the Space Commission chief is usually held by one person only.
- Mr Somanath will be the 10th chairman of ISRO. He is at present Director of Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC).

### 4. Harvesting festivals

#### News?

- The festival of harvest, Lohri, is being celebrated today in North India especially in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Jammu and Chandigarh.
- Lohri marks the end of the long nights of winter and welcomes the longer days of summer, as the Sun begins its journey to the Northern Hemisphere.
- Lohri is celebrated with a bonfire.
- The festival is mostly associated with crop harvesting and happiness.
- Popcorns, peanuts, Rewari and Gajak are distributed to all neighbours, friends and relatives on the occasion.

- Other harvest festivals of Makar Sankranti, Pongal, Bhogali Bihu, Uttarayan and Paush Parva, mark the harvesting season of crops as the winter season ends and ushers in the spring.

### Significance:

- People enjoy the fruits of good harvest and celebrate these festivals which also emphasize the need to preserve our environment.
- These festivals are not only an example of Indian diversity but also that of unity in diversity of our country.

## 5. Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar

### Why in news?

Minister of State for Education virtually launched Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-2022.

### About:

- At the National level, 40 schools will be selected for awards this year.
- The award money for the schools has been enhanced this year from 50,000 to 60,000 per school under Samagra Shiksha scheme.
- In order to create self-motivation

and awareness about sanitation, the Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) was first instituted by the Department of School Education and Literacy, in 2016-17.

- The SVP 2021-22 is open to all categories of schools in both rural and urban areas.
- The schools will be assessed through an online portal and mobile app in six sub-categories: Water, Sanitation, Hand Washing with soap, Operation and Maintenance, Behaviour Change and Capacity Building and the newly added category on COVID-19 Preparedness and Response and the system will generate the overall score and rating automatically.

## 6. ATL Space Challenge 2021

### Why in news?

NITI Aayog's Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) has declared the results of the 'ATL Space Challenge 2021', after successful completion and overwhelming participation from young innovators.

### About:

- The Challenge was launched in collaboration with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Central Board of Secondary

Education (CBSE).

- The event coincides with the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, also celebrated as the National Youth Day.
- The challenge was designed for all the school students, mentors and teachers across the country who not only are associated with schools having Atal Tinkering Labs (ATL) but for all the non ATL schools as well.
- The ATL Space Challenge witnessed over 2500 submissions from both ATL and Non-ATL students across the country from which 75 top innovators were selected and announced.

## **7. India-US Homeland Security Dialogue**

### **Why in news?**

- The Senior Officers Meeting of the India-US Homeland Security Dialogue was held on Wednesday in virtual mode.
- The meeting was co-chaired by Home Secretary and Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy and Plans, Department of Homeland Security, Government of USA.

- During the meeting, both sides reviewed the ongoing cooperation and identified further steps that can be taken to explore opportunities and synergies in advancing cooperation in counter-terrorism, cyber security, securing critical infrastructure, maritime security and aviation security among other issues.
- During the meeting, both sides agreed that the existing sub-groups under the Homeland Security Dialogue on law enforcement engagement, securing global supply chains, investigative cooperation, and capacity building would meet separately in the coming months.
- It will deliberate and explore how ongoing cooperation can be strengthened further.
- The meeting concluded with both sides expressing satisfaction with the ongoing partnership and agreeing to deepen bilateral engagement and collaboration in all areas of mutual concern.
- The two sides look forward to holding the Ministerial-level Homeland Security Dialogue later this year.

## 8. First-ever on-site evidence of water on moon

### News?

- China's Chang'e 5 lunar lander has found the first-ever on-site evidence of water on the surface of the moon, lending new evidence to the dryness of the satellite.
- The presence of water had been confirmed by remote observation but the lander has now detected signs of water in rocks and soil.
- It was the solar wind that contributed to the most humidity of lunar soil as it brought hydrogen that makes up the water, the researchers said.
- The additional 60ppm water in the rock may originate from the lunar interior, according to the researchers.
- Therefore, the rock is estimated to hail from an older, more humid basaltic unit before being ejected onto the landing site to be picked up by the lunar lander.

## 9. New fintech department of RBI

### News?

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has created a new department to identify challenges and opportunities in financial technology, particularly around cryptocurrency.
- Indian tax authorities are already going after cryptocurrency exchanges for alleged tax evasion, despite a lack of clarity on crypto taxation, while stakeholders have also been raising concerns about the lack of regulations for the country's crypto industry for more than a year.
- Apart from cryptocurrency, experts believe the creation of the RBI's central bank digital currency will also fall under its purview.
- The central bank announced plans for a sovereign digital currency in July 2021 and a pilot run could happen as soon as in the next fiscal year, beginning April 1.

