

Current Affairs search results for tag: popular

1. The Indian Navy launched 'Operation Sankalp' in the Persian Gulf (June 22, 2022)

The Indian Navy has launched 'Operation Sankalp' in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman as a measure to ensure the safety of Indian ships.

- The stealth frigate of the Indian Navy, INS Talwar is presently deployed for Operation Sankalp, the third consecutive year of Indian Navy presence in the Gulf region, with the objective of safeguarding India's maritime interests.
- **Operation Sankalp**
 - The Indian Navy had launched Operation Sankalp in the Gulf region on June 19, 2019, following the deteriorating security situation in the region following attacks on merchant ships in the Gulf of Oman.
 - It was started to ensure the safe passage of Indian flag ships passing through the Strait of Hormuz.
 - The operation is carried out in collaboration with stakeholders including the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Shipping, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas.
 - Under this, the Indian Navy is constantly monitoring the situation in the Gulf region. It maintains a presence in the region to ensure the security of maritime trade as well as the security of Indian flag merchant ships.
- **Persian Gulf**
 - Also called the Arabian Gulf, it is a shallow marginal sea in the Indian Ocean located between the Arabian Peninsula and southwestern Iran.
 - Its length is about 990 km and its width ranges from a maximum of about 340 km to a minimum of 55 km in the Strait of Hormuz.
- **Gulf of Oman**
 - The Gulf of Oman is located in the northwestern part of the Arabian Sea between the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula (Oman) and Iran.
 - It is 560 km long and connects to the Persian Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz.
 - It provides the only gateway into the Persian Gulf from the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean.
 - It is a shipping route for the oil-producing region around the Persian Gulf.

2. Summer Solstice 2022 (June 22, 2022)

June 21 was the day of the summer solstice in the northern hemisphere. People in the Northern Hemisphere celebrate the summer solstice, which is the **longest day of the year.**

- **What is the Summer Solstice?**

- Solstice means 'the sun is still' in Latin.
- It is a natural phenomenon that occurs twice every year, once in summer and once during winter.
- It is the longest day and shortest night of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
- On this day, more energy is received from the sun.
- On this day the countries of the Northern Hemisphere are closest to the Sun and the Sun shines upward at the Tropic of Cancer (23.5° North).
- The summer solstice marks the beginning of the astronomical summer and occurs when the earth has its maximum tilt towards the sun.
- The Earth orbits the Sun at an angle.
- For half the year, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted towards the Sun and, therefore, it is summer in the Northern Hemisphere and winter in the Southern Hemisphere.
- During the second half of the year, the Northern Hemisphere is tilted away from the Sun, thus causing winter in the Northern Hemisphere and summer in the South.

- **High amount of energy**

- It is characterised by the high amount of energy received from the sun on this day.
- According to NASA, the amount of energy the Earth receives from the Sun on this day is 30% more at the North Pole than at the Equator.
- The maximum amount of sunlight received by the northern hemisphere during this time is usually on **June 20, 21 or 22**.
- In contrast, the southern hemisphere receives the most sunlight on **December 21, 22 or 23**, when the northern hemisphere has the longest nights, or the winter solstice.

3. 26th Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit - 2022 (June 22, 2022)

26th Commonwealth Heads of Government Summit 2022 organised on 20-25 June 2022, in Kigali, Rwanda.

- External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar attended the meeting.
- The meeting had been postponed twice due to Covid-19 pandemic.
- During the meeting, leaders of Commonwealth member states will deliberate on global challenges such as climate change, food security and health.
- **Theme** of the summit - **Delivering a Common Future - Connecting, Innovating, Transforming.**
- **About Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM)**

- It brings together delegations from 54 countries in Africa, the Caribbean, the Americas, Europe, Asia and the Pacific.
- It aims to strengthen multilateral cooperation, explore new opportunities and tackle common challenges for the betterment of future generations.
- It is hosted alternately by different member countries.
- This meeting has been held Since 1971.

- **Members of the Commonwealth of Nations**

- The head of the Commonwealth is the Queen of Great Britain **Elizabeth II**.
- He received this title as a result of elections following the resignation of his father.
- The title of head cannot be inherited, so the new head of the Commonwealth of Nations is elected by voting at each meeting.
- The Commonwealth comprises **54 countries** of the world in all 6 continents.
- The members have a total population of 2.1 billion, which is about a third of the world's population.
- Of its total population, 1.17 billion live in India.
- After India, the next largest Commonwealth countries by population are Pakistan (176 million), Bangladesh (156 million), Nigeria (149 million).
- The land area of the Commonwealth of Nations accounts for about 21% of the total world land area.
- The largest Commonwealth nations by area are Canada, Australia and India.

4. Government clears the appointment of new chief justices in 5 high courts (June 20, 2022)

The government has approved the appointment of new Chief Justices in five High Courts.

- The Ministry of Law and Justice has released the notification for the appointment of Chief Justices of the High Courts of Uttarakhand, Telangana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Guwahati.
- **Uttarakhand High Court** - Justice Vipin Sanghi of the Delhi High Court will be appointed as the Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court.
- **Gauhati High Court** - Gujarat High Court judge Rashmin Manharbhai Chhaya has been appointed Gauhati Chief Justice.
- **Telangana High Court** - Telangana High Court judge Ujjal Bhuyan has been appointed Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court.
- **Himachal Pradesh High Court** - Bombay High Court Chief Justice AA Sayed has been appointed Himachal Pradesh High Court Chief Justice.

- **Rajasthan High Court** - Bombay High Court Justice SS Shinde has been appointed Rajasthan High Court Chief Justice.

- **Judicial vacancies**

- As of June 1, the number of judicial vacancies in high courts remains at 400, while the number of serving judges is 708.
- The sanctioned strength of judges in 25 High Courts is 1,108.

- **Important facts about High Courts**

- Number of High Courts in India - 25
- Newest High Court of India - Andhra Pradesh High Court established on 1st January 2019.
- The High Court is the highest court in a state in India.
- Article 217 of the Constitution states that the Judge of a High Court shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the State.
- There is a High Court for Haryana, Punjab and the Union Territory of Chandigarh.
- There is only one High Court for the northeastern states.
- The first High Court in India is the Calcutta High Court, it was established in 1862.
- The Gauhati High Court has the largest number of benches in India.

5. India's first Display Fabrication Unit in Hyderabad (June 16, 2022)

Recently Telangana Government has signed an MoU with Bengaluru based Elest to set up India's first Display Fabrication Unit in Hyderabad.

- This display fabrication unit will be set up with an investment of Rs 24,000 crore.
- It will be set up under the India Semiconductor Mission program of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- The Generation 6 AMOLED Displays FAB will be set up in Hyderabad to manufacture next generation displays for tablet computers, smartphones and laptops.

- **Importance of Display Fab**

- Setting up Display Fab in Telangana will put India on the global map along with countries like the US, China and Japan.
- Having a display fab in Telangana will give a boost to the electronics and IT ecosystem in the state and its subsidiaries.
- Ever since the Bharat Semiconductor Mission has been announced, the Telangana government is working on a mission mode to set up the fabs in the state.

- **Semiconductor mission**

- ISM was launched in 2021 under the aegis of Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) with an outlay of Rs 76,000 crore.
- The scheme is a part of a comprehensive program for the development of the semiconductor and display ecosystem in India.
- It was launched with the aim of providing financial assistance to companies investing in semiconductors, design ecosystem and display manufacturing.

6. Indian Railways flags off country's first private train under Bharat Gaurav scheme (June 16, 2022)

The first train to be operated between Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu) and Shirdi (Maharashtra) by a private operator under the "Bharat Gaurav" scheme of the Indian Railways was flagged off on June 14.

- With this Southern Railway became the first zone of the Indian Railways to be the first registered service provider under the "Bharat Gaurav" scheme.
- The stoppages of the train are Tiruppur, Erode, Salem, Yelahanka, Dharmavaram, Mantralayam Road and Wadi.
- South Star Rail based in Coimbatore is the registered service provider operating the train.
- The service provider company has paid Rs 1 crore as security deposit to Southern Railway for the rake having 20 coach structure.

• Features of the train

- First AC Coach -1, 2-tier AC coaches - 3, 3-tier AC coaches-8, Sleeper Class coaches-5 , Pantry car-1 and Luggage-cum-Brake Vans-2. (Total - 20 coaches).

• About Bharat Gaurav Scheme

- In November 2021, Indian Railways introduced Bharat Gaurav trains which will be operated by private operators and will run on theme-based circuits.
- Through this scheme operators have the "Right of Use" of railway rakes and infrastructure.
- Under this scheme, private players and tour operators can buy trains on lease from the Railways and operate them on any circuit of their choice and decide the fares, route and quality of services.
- Till now, railways used to operate the passenger section and goods section but now the tourism section has also been added under this scheme.
- The scheme has been developed after extensive discussions with several state governments including Odisha, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and stakeholders.

7. ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meet (June 16, 2022)

India is hosting the special ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi from June 16-17 to mark the 30th anniversary of the dialogue relations. It also marks the 10th anniversary of India's strategic partnership with ASEAN.

- The year 2022 has been designated as the ASEAN-India Friendship Year.
- This is the first time that India is hosting such a special meeting with ASEAN foreign ministers.
- External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar and Vivian Balakrishnan, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Singapore will co-chair the meeting.
- Myanmar's foreign minister is unlikely to attend the 24th ASEAN-India Ministerial Summit.
- Foreign Ministers of other ASEAN Member States and ASEAN Secretary General will participate in the meeting.
- The **theme** of the meeting - **Building Bridges in the Indo-Pacific.**

- **ASEAN-India dialogue**

- It was initiated in 1992 with the establishment of the Regional Partnership, which evolved into a Full Dialogue in December 1995, a Summit-level Partnership in 2002, and a Strategic Partnership in 2012.
- At present, the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership stands on a strong foundation.
- ASEAN is central to India's Act East Policy and the Comprehensive Indo-Pacific Strategy.
- This multi-faceted partnership includes several regional dialogue mechanisms and working groups that meet regularly at various levels and include annual summits, ministerial and senior officials' meetings.
- Ongoing India-ASEAN cooperation is guided by the 2021-2025 Action Plan that was adopted in 2020.

- **About ASEAN**

- Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN is an international organisation formed in Bangkok, Thailand in 1967.
- It promotes economic development, peace, security, social progress and cultural development in the Southeast Asian region.
- ASEAN Secretariat – Indonesia, Jakarta.
- General Secretary of ASEAN - Lim Jock Hoi, Brunei
- Official Languages - Burmese, Filipino, Indonesian, Khmer, Lao, Malay, Mandarin, Tamil, Thai and Vietnamese
- Working Language - English
- ASEAN Summit is the supreme policy making body of ASEAN.
- ASEAN is third largest market in the world
- It is the sixth largest economy in the world, third in Asia.

- ASEAN has Free-trade agreements (FTAs) with China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand.

- **ASEAN Member Countries**

- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- Philippines
- Singapore
- Thailand
- Brunei
- Vietnam
- Laos
- Myanmar
- Cambodia

For more details please visit News of 13 May 2022

8. Short-range ballistic missile Prithvi-II successfully tested (June 16, 2022)

India successfully launched the Prithvi-II short-range ballistic missile in the night on June 15 from an integrated test range at Chandipur in Odisha.

- **Prithvi-II Missile**

- It is an indigenously developed surface-to-surface missile, which has a range of about 250 km and can carry one tonne of payload.
- It was developed by DRDO and first used by the Indian Air Force.
- It is a proven system and is capable of hitting targets with a very high degree of accuracy.
- The user training launch successfully validated all operational and technical parameters of the missile.
- Prithvi Missiles of India
- Prithvi missile is a tactical surface-to-surface short-range ballistic missile developed by DRDO under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme.
- Prithvi was the first missile to be developed under this programme.

- **Three variants of Prithvi Missiles**

1. **Prithvi-I** - Army version -150 km range with a payload of 1,000 kg.
2. **Prithvi II** - Air Force version 250-350 km range with a payload of 500 kg
3. **Prithvi III** - Naval version 350 km range with a payload of 1,000 kg

- **The Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP)**

- It was started by the Government of India in 1982-83, it included the following projects -

1. **Prithvi** - Short range surface to surface missile
2. **Trishul** - Short range surface to air missile
3. **Aakash** - Medium range surface to air missile
4. **Nag** - Third generation anti-tank missile
5. **Agni-I** -Agni missile was later separated from the IGMDP due to its strategic importance

9. Four holy relics of Lord Buddha from Kapilvastu placed at Gandan Monastery in Mongolia (June 15, 2022)

Four sacred relics of Lord Buddha were kept at the Gandan Monastery in Mongolia from Kapilvastu, India, to mark the Mongolian Buddha Purnima celebrated on June 14.

- Four sacred Kapilavastu relics brought from India by a delegation led by Union Law and Justice Minister Kiren Rijiju, and other relics from Mongolia will be displayed at Gandan for Buddhist devotees to visit till June 24.
- Four holy relics from India were brought to Mongolia on 13 June.
- A 25-member delegation led by Law and Justice Minister Kiren Rijiju has arrived in Mongolia with the holy relics.
- The main Buddha statue at Gandan Monastery was gifted to the people of Mongolia by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 and was installed in 2018.
- The Kapilvastu relic is one of the 22 special relics housed in the National Museum of the Ministry of Culture.

- **What are the holy relics?**

- According to Buddhist belief, Buddha attained salvation at the age of 80 in Kushinagar (Uttar Pradesh).
- The Mallas of Kushinagar performed his last rites as a universal king.
- The relics from the funeral pyre were collected and divided into eight shares.

- It was distributed among the Licchavis of Vaishali, Sakyas of Kapilavastu, Ajathasatrus of Magadha, Mallas of Kushinagar, Mallas of Pava, Bullies of Allakappa, Koliyas of Ramagrama and a Brahmana of Vethadipa.
- Its purpose was to build stupas over the sacred relics.
- The stupas over the bodily remains of Buddha (Sarrika Stupa) are the oldest surviving sacred places of Buddhism.
- Ashoka (272-232 BCE), an ardent follower of Buddhism, is believed to have built seven stupas.

- **Kapilvastu Relics**

- The discovery of an inscribed coffin at the stupa site at Piprahwa (near Siddharthnagar in Uttar Pradesh) helped identify ancient Kapilavastu.
- The inscription on top of the coffin mentions the relics of the Buddha and his community, the Shakyas.
- Records from the Union Ministry of Culture show that this discovery was followed by several explorations.
- The excavation of the stupa by the Archaeological Survey of India in 1971-77 led to the discovery of two other relic coffins containing 22 sacred bone remains, which are now under the supervision of the National Museum.
- This was followed by the discovery of more than 40 terracotta ceilings which establish that Piprahwa was the ancient city of Kapilvastu.

10. India expanding its nuclear arsenal - SIPRI (June 14, 2022)

Stockholm-based defence think tank SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) claimed on June 13 that India had 160 nuclear warheads as of January 2022, indicating India's expansion of nuclear arsenal.

- India's nuclear stockpile increased from 156 in January 2021 to 160 in January 2022.
- **Nuclear stockpile of neighbouring countries**
- Pakistan's nuclear stockpile remains at 165 in January 2021 and January 2022.
- In January 2021 and January 2022, China had 350 nuclear warheads.
- China is nearing substantial expansion of its nuclear weapons arsenal, satellite images indicate, including the construction of more than 300 new missile silos.
- India and Pakistan appear to be expanding their nuclear arsenals, and both countries introduced the new type of nuclear system in 2021 and continue to develop it.
- **Countries with nuclear weapons**
- As per SIPRI, the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea have nuclear weapons.

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

- SIPRI is an independent international institute dedicated to research into conflict, armaments, arms control and disarmament. It is funded mainly by the Swedish Government.
- Established in 1966
- Headquarters : Solna, Sweden