

# Daily Current Affairs

## 01 January 2024

### 16<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission

- The Centre has constituted the **Sixteenth Finance Commission**. Former NITI Aayog Vice Chairman, **Dr Arvind Panagariya** who is a Professor at Columbia University, will be the Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission.
- **Ministry of Finance** in a statement said that IAS officer Ritvik Ranjanam Pandey will be the secretary of the Commission.



- The Commission will make recommendations in matters including the distribution between the **Union and the States** of the net proceeds of taxes and measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement the resources of the Panchayats and Municipalities in the State.
- The Commission may review the present arrangements on financing Disaster Management initiatives, with reference to the funds constituted under the **Disaster Management Act, 2005** and make appropriate recommendations thereon.
- The Finance Commission has been requested to make its report available by 31st of October, 2025 covering a period of five years commencing on the 1st of April, 2026.

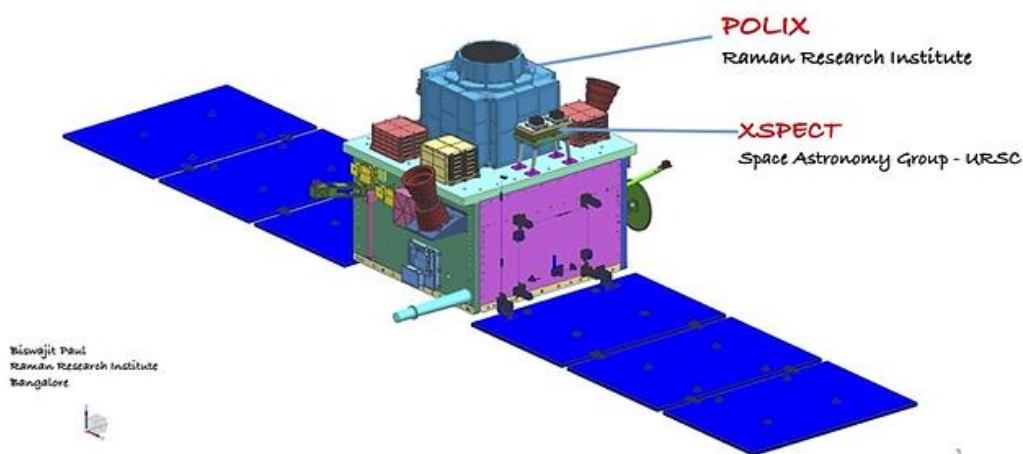
## X-ray Polarimeter Satellite

- **ISRO's PSLV-C58** has launched XPOSAT Satellite into an Eastward low inclination orbit on January 01, 2024 09:10 Hrs IST.
- The **PSLV Orbital Experimental Module-3 (POEM-3)** experiment will be executed meeting the objective of 10 identified payloads, supplied by ISRO and IN-SPACe.
- **XPoSat (X-ray Polarimeter Satellite) is the first dedicated scientific satellite** from ISRO to carry out research in space-based polarisation measurements of X-ray emission from celestial sources. The Satellite configuration is modified from the IMS-2 bus platform.



- The Configuration of the mainframe systems are derived based on the heritage of IRS satellites. It carries two payloads namely POLIX (Polarimeter Instrument in X-rays) and XSPECT (X-ray Spectroscopy and Timing).
- **POLIX is realized by Raman Research Institute and XSPECT is by Space Astronomy Group of URSC.**
- To measure polarisation of **X-rays in the energy band 8-30keV emanating from about 50 potential cosmic sources** through Thomson Scattering by POLIX payload.
- To carry out long term spectral and temporal studies of cosmic X-ray sources in the energy band **0.8-15keV by XSPECT payload.**

## *X-ray Polarimetry Satellite*



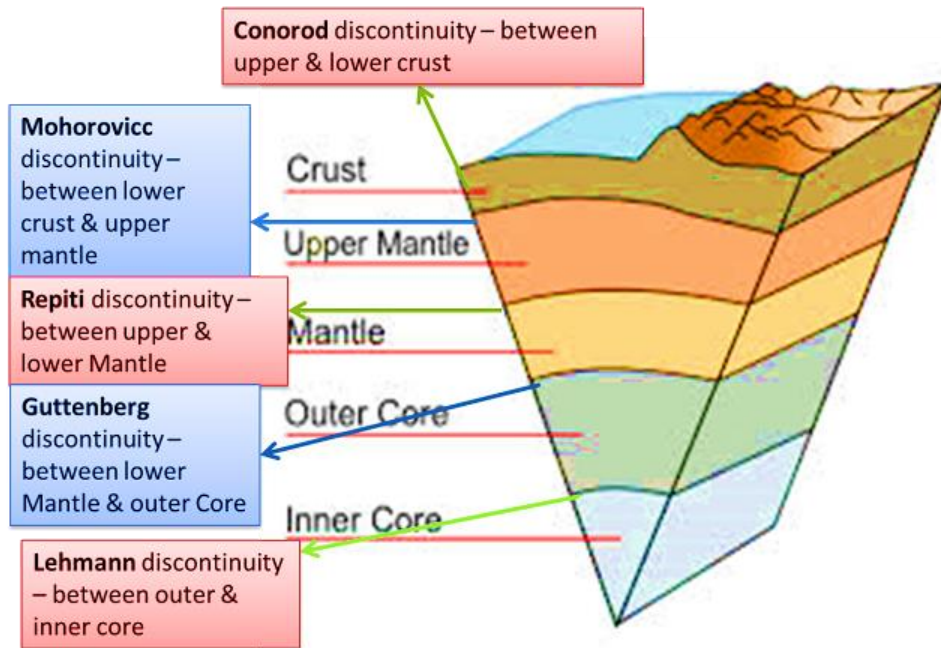
- To carry out polarisation and spectroscopic measurements of X-ray emissions from cosmic sources by POLIX and XSPECT payloads respectively in the common energy band.
- Following The Launch Of XPoSat, **India Has Become The Second Country** In The World After The United States To Send A Specialised Astronomy Observatory To Study Black Holes And Neutron Stars In Our Galaxy. The Mission Life Of The Primary Payload XPoSat Is About Five Years.
- The **10 Other Payloads** Are From Takeme2space, LBS Institute Technology For Women, K J Somaiya Institute Of Technology, Inspecity Space Labs Private Ltd, Dhruva Space Private Ltd, Bellatrix Aerospace Private Ltd (Two Payloads) And Three Payloads From The ISRO.

## **Mengxiang Sets Sail For Earth's Mantle Exploration**

- China has introduced its **groundbreaking ocean drilling vessel, Mengxiang**, signifying a pivotal moment in scientific exploration. Developed by the China Geological Survey in collaboration with **150 research institutes and companies**, the **vessel is named "dream"** in Chinese, reflecting its ambitious mission.
- The **Mengxiang aims to penetrate Earth's crust** and delve into the mysteries of the mantle, marking humanity's inaugural foray into this uncharted territory.
- Weighing an impressive 33,000 tonnes and stretching 179 meters (590 feet), **Mengxiang is a colossal ship** with exceptional capabilities.



- It boasts a range of 15,000 nautical miles and can operate for 120 days per port call. Engineered to withstand powerful tropical cyclones, it stands as a testament to advancements in deep-sea drilling technology.
- The vessel's drilling prowess is unmatched, with the capacity to reach depths of **11,000 meters below the sea's surface**.
- Traditionally confined to the Earth's crust, scientific exploration now eyes the mantle, a crucial layer connecting the surface to the core.
- The **Mengxiang seeks to breach the Mohorovicic discontinuity**, or Moho, the final frontier for human exploration into the mantle. While American scientists have pursued this goal since the 1960s, **Mengxiang's cutting-edge technology** represents a new chapter in the quest for understanding Earth's structure.
- Mengxiang recently underwent trials, primarily focusing on its **propulsion system**.
- However, the details of its core drilling operations remain shrouded in mystery. Overcoming challenges, such as high temperatures and pressures beyond 7,000 meters, poses a significant hurdle, as acknowledged by experts like Wan Buyan, a leading figure in seabed engineering.



## Argentina Rejects BRICS Membership

- Argentine President Javier Milei has officially **declined the invitation to join the BRICS** (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) grouping of major emerging economies.
- The rejection was conveyed through letters sent to BRICS leaders, solidifying Argentina’s decision to abstain from the bloc.
- The libertarian outsider, who assumed office recently after a significant electoral victory over traditional political parties, had pledged during his campaign not to align Argentina with BRICS.
- President Milei’s rejection was grounded in the assertion that Argentina’s membership was **“not considered appropriate at this time.”**



- The letters emphasized a departure from the foreign policy approach of the previous administration, indicating a comprehensive review of decisions made earlier.
- The president highlighted that his **geopolitical alignment prioritizes** ties with the United States and Israel, eschewing alliances with communist nations.
- Although Milei had initially expressed intentions to sever ties with major trading partners like China and Brazil, his tone has become more conciliatory since taking office.
- This move underscores the **evolving nature of Argentina’s foreign policy** under the new leadership.
- The rejection of BRICS membership aligns with Milei’s commitment to a distinct geopolitical trajectory for the nation.

## CRC Samba Jammu

- In a historic event, the **Lt. Governor Shri Manoj Sinha** of the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir unveiled the commemorative plaque, officially inaugurating the **Composite Regional Centre (CRC) for Skill Development, Rehabilitation & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)** in Samba – Jammu.
- This momentous occasion signifies a significant stride towards **inclusivity and empowerment for individuals** with disabilities in the region.



*Lt. Governor Inaugurated CRC Samba-Jammu for Person With Disabilities*

- The inauguration ceremony, held at Second Extension, Gandhi Nagar, Green Belt Jammu-180004, witnessed the convergence of esteemed dignitaries, government officials, and representatives from the disability community.

- The presence of key figures underscored the importance of this initiative in fostering an inclusive society.
- The CRC Samba – Jammu, an initiative by the **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India**, aims to provide comprehensive support, skill development, and rehabilitation services. The overarching goal is to empower individuals with disabilities and facilitate their seamless integration into mainstream society.
- “The CRC is a testament to our commitment to creating an environment where persons with disabilities can thrive.” The center is not only poised to offer essential services but also serves as a hub **for skill development, promoting self-reliance and empowerment.**
- The commitment to providing top-notch services and creating a supportive environment for persons with disabilities was evident during the tour.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

### 1. Chairman Of 16<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission

- A. Dr Arvind Panagariya
- B. Dr Sanjay Aggarwal
- C. Dr Ankit Panagariya
- D. Dr Sohail Hussain

**ANSWER: A**

### 2. X-ray Polarimeter Satellite Launched By

- A. JAXA
- B. ISRO
- C. NASA
- D. ESA

**ANSWER: B**

### 3. Ocean Drilling Vessel Mengxiang Belongs To

- A. China
- B. Japan
- C. Russia
- D. India

**ANSWER: A**

**4. In Which Summit Will The Official Announcement Of The Submarine Tourism Project Take Place**

- A. Kumbh Mela Summit
- B. Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit
- C. Tourism Innovation Summit
- D. National Tourism Day

**ANSWER: B**

**5. Who Recently Rejects BRICS Membership**

- A. Argentina
- B. Egypt
- C. Ethiopia
- D. Saudi Arabia

**ANSWER: A**

**6. Who Is Chairperson Of Special Committee To Examine Need For A Separate Competition Law For Digital Companies**

- A. Manoj Govil
- B. Ashwini Vaishnaw
- C. Nirmala Sitharaman
- D. Ramesh Chand

**ANSWER: A**

**7. Which Institution Constituted A Taskforce To Examine Impact Of Digital Personal Data Protection Act On Insurance Sector**

- A. Ministry of Electronics and IT
- B. IRDAI
- C. RBI
- D. SEBI

**ANSWER: B**



**8. “Gram Manchitra” Application, Recently Launched, Is Associated With**

- A. Geographic Information System
- B. Cultural Archive
- C. Educational Resource
- D. Vaccination Reminder

**ANSWER: A**

**9. Impatiens Karuppusamyi Which Was Seen In News, Belongs To Which Species**

- A. Fish
- B. Plant
- C. Bird
- D. Spider

**ANSWER: B**

**10. Ravi Bishnoi, Who Was Seen In News, Plays Which Sports**

- A. Cricket
- B. Tennis
- C. Squash
- D. Chess

**ANSWER: A**

**11. ‘TRIPS Agreement’ Is Associated With Which Institution**

- A. WTO
- B. UNICEF
- C. IMF
- D. WEF

**ANSWER: A**

**12. Which Union Ministry Is Associated With Unique Disability ID Project**

- A. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- B. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- C. Ministry of Women and Child Development
- D. Ministry of Finance

**ANSWER: B**

**13. First Country In World To Be Officially Validated By WHO For Eliminating Kala Azar As A Public Health Problem**

- A. India
- B. USA
- C. Indonesia
- D. Bangladesh

**ANSWER: D**

**14. International Institute For Unification Of Private Law. UNIDROIT Is Based At Which City**

- A. Geneva
- B. Paris
- C. Rome
- D. Washington DC

**ANSWER: C**

**15. DRDO Aeronautical Test Range, That Makes News Frequently, Is Located Near Which City**

- A. Secunderabad
- B. Chitradurga
- C. Bhubaneshwar
- D. Jodhpur

**ANSWER: B**

**16. Gabon Which Was Seen In The News, Is Located In Which Region**

- A. Africa
- B. Europe
- C. Australia
- D. Asia

**ANSWER: A**

**17. What Is AIRAWAT That Is Recently Making News**

- A. Submarine
- B. AI Supercomputer
- C. 5G-enabled Drone
- D. Recently Discovered Exoplanet

**ANSWER: B**

**18. Recently Launched My iGOT & VIKAS Are Related To Which Government Initiative**

- A. Digital India
- B. Skill India Mission
- C. Mission Karmayogi
- D. Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan

**ANSWER: C**

**19. Venue Of 26<sup>th</sup> National Integration And Youth Leadership Camp**

- A. Lucknow
- B. Itanagar
- C. Nagpur
- D. Bengaluru

**ANSWER: B**

**20. Which Strait Is Also Known As Gate Of Tears In Arabic**

- A. Bab al-Mandeb
- B. Strait of Hormuz
- C. Bass strait
- D. Strait of Johor

**ANSWER: A**