

Daily Current Affairs

02 January 2024

16th 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.

'Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, J&K

- The Centre has declared the 'Tehreek-e-Hurriyat, J&K (TeH) as an 'Unlawful Association' under the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act-UAPA**.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah said, the outfit is involved in forbidden activities to separate Jammu and Kashmir from India and establish Islamic rule.



- He said, the group is found spreading **anti-India propaganda and continuing terror activities to fuel secessionism in J&K**.
- Mr Shah added that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's zero-tolerance policy against terrorism, any individual or organization found involved in anti-India activities will be thwarted forthwith.

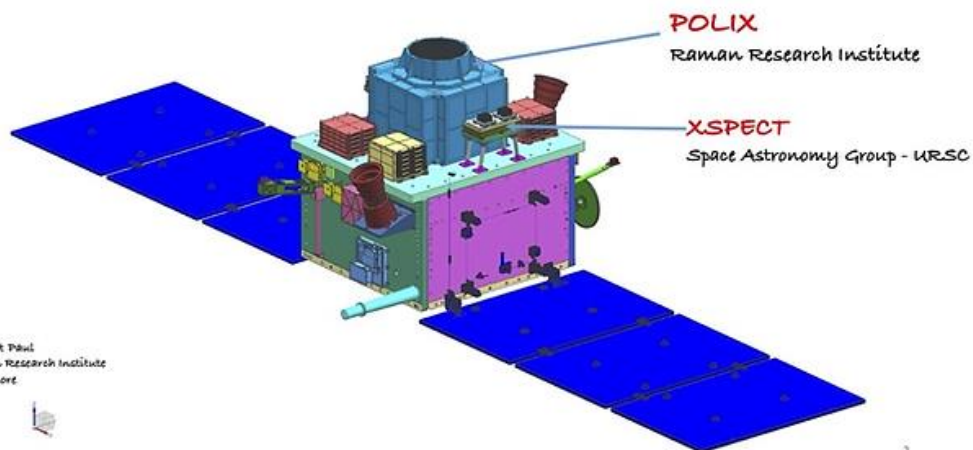
X-ray Polarimeter Satellite

- **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.

Gangster Goldy Brar

- The central government declared Gangster Goldy Brar a terrorist under the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act**.
- The Goldy presently residing at **Brampton in Canada** is associated with Babbar Khalsa International.



- The Home Ministry said on Monday, Goldy was involved in **multiple killing and figured in making threatening calls** to pro-nationalist leaders demanding ransom and posting the claims of killings on different social media platforms.
- According to the Home Ministry, Goldy has also been involved in smuggling of high-grade arms, ammunitions and explosive materials.
- Goldy and his associates have been conspiring to **disrupt the peace, communal harmony and law and order in Punjab** through nefarious designs including sabotage, raising of terror modules, carrying out targeted killings, and other anti-national activities.

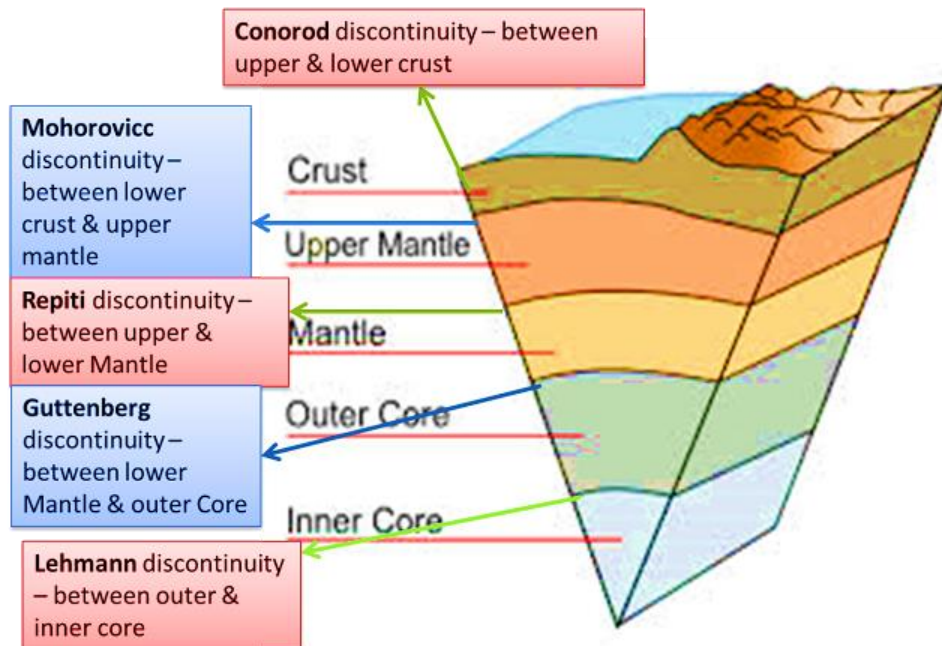
Mengxiang Sets Sail For Earth's Mantle Exploration

- 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.



India's First Submarine Tourism In Dwarka

- The Gujarat government, in collaboration with Mazgaon Dock Limited (MDL), is set to make waves in the tourism industry by introducing India's first submarine tourism venture.
- This ambitious project aims to explore the mesmerizing marine life surrounding Bet Dwarka, a sacred island off the coast of Dwarka city, steeped in mythological significance within Hinduism.



- According to ancient mythological texts, **Bet Dwarka** is believed to house a submerged city created by Lord Krishna himself. This mystical aspect adds an extra layer of intrigue to the submarine tourism project, as it promises to unveil the secrets hidden beneath the waves.
- Taking inspiration from the **Titanic submersible expedition**, the Gujarat submarine tourism project is designed to offer a unique underwater experience. Tourists will have the opportunity to dive 100 meters below the sea surface in a specially designed submarine, providing an up-close encounter with the rich marine life surrounding the island.



- The tourism facility is expected to be operationalized before Diwali in 2024, marking a festive occasion for both locals and tourists. This groundbreaking initiative aims to redefine tourism in Gujarat by offering an unprecedented adventure that combines mythology, history, and marine exploration.



- Anticipation is building as an official project announcement is scheduled to take place at the upcoming **Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit from January 10 to 12,**

2024. This summit will serve as a platform to unveil the details and significance of the submarine tourism project, further solidifying Gujarat's commitment to innovation in the tourism sector.

- As a city already thronged by religious tourists visiting the **Dwarkadhish Temple**, this submarine tourism venture promises to diversify the attractions and appeal to a broader audience.

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 16th 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. Bhubaneswar
- 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 26th 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

