

Daily Current Affairs 23rd Feb 2022

Important News: International

Russia recognises Ukraine Rebel Regions as independent



Why in News

- Recently, Russian President Vladimir Putin recognised the Ukraine Rebel Regions in eastern Ukraine - Donetsk and Luhansk – as independent areas despite calls from the west to put an end to the tensions driven by fears that Russia may attack Ukraine.

Key Points

- Mr. Putin justified his decision in a far-reaching, pre-recorded speech blaming NATO for the current crisis and calling the U.S.-led alliance an existential threat to Russia.
- Mr. Putin's announcement shatters a 2015 peace deal signed in Minsk requiring Ukrainian authorities to offer a broad self-rule to the rebel regions, which marked a major diplomatic coup for Moscow.
- The Donbass region, comprising the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts of Ukraine, has been at the centre of the conflict since March 2014 when Moscow (Russia) invaded and annexed the Crimean Peninsula.

MINSK I: Ukraine and the Russian-backed separatists agreed a 12-point ceasefire deal in the Belarusian capital in September 2014. The agreement quickly broke down, with violations by both sides.

MINSK II: Representatives of Russia, Ukraine, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the leaders of two pro-Russian separatist regions signed a 13-point agreement in February 2015.

Source: The Hindu

Indian students asked to leave Ukraine temporarily



- Indian Embassy in Kyiv advised Indian students to leave Ukraine temporarily in the interest of their safety.

- The Embassy did not wait for an official confirmation of online classes from universities amid the prevailing circumstances.
- In an advisory, citing de-escalation as immediate priority, the Indian Embassy has mentioned that it is engaged with the respective authorities for streamlining of the education process for Indian students.

Source: AIR

Important News: India

Empanelment rule removed for central deputation of DIG-level IPS officers



- The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) issued an order on Feb 10th, 2022 that those IPS officers coming to the Centre at DIG-level would no longer be required to be empanelled at that level with the Union government.
- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved the proposal of Ministry of Home Affairs for dispensing with the empanelment at the level of DIG with immediate effect and carrying out the corresponding stipulated amendments, in the existing IPS Tenure Policy.
- It would allow to call any IAS, IPS or IFoS officer on central deputation with or without the state's consent, the Union government can order on DIG-level IPS officers that may not be palatable to the states.

According to previous rules, a DIG-ranked IPS officer with minimum experience of 14 years could be deputed to the Centre only if the Union Home Secretary-led Police Establishment Board empanelled them as DIGs at the Centre. The board chooses the panel on the basis of officers' career and vigilance records.

Source: The Indian Express

Union Govt. extends term of J&K Delimitation Commission for second time in a year

- As the Ministry of Law and Justice informed, the Centre extended the term by two months by amending the notification issued on March 6, 2020.
- The panel's term will end on May 6, 2022.
- The delimitation process is crucial for kick-starting the political process in Jammu and Kashmir.

Background

- In 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said elections would be held in J&K after the delimitation process in the UT was over.
- On March 6, 2020, the government had set up the Delimitation Commission, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Prakash Desai, to wind up delimitation within a year.
- As per the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, the number of Assembly seats in J&K

would increase from 107 to 114, which is expected to benefit the Jammu region.

- The panel was granted one-year extension last year.

What is Delimitation Commission?

- The Delimitation commission or Boundary commission of India is a commission established by the Government of India under the provisions of the Delimitation Commission Act.
- The main task of the commission is redrawing the boundaries of the various assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies based on a recent census.

Source: The Indian Express

RBI cautions against 'sRide'



- Reserve Bank of India has alerted citizens that a car-pooling application by the name 'sRide' is being run without the required permissions.
- Cautioning people using such apps, the RBI has urged citizens to verify the list of authorized payment system providers from the RBI's website before parting with their money.
- The Gurgaon-based sRide Tech Private Limited is operating a semi-closed wallet without obtaining the requisite authorisation under the provisions of the **Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007**.
- As such, any person dealing with sRide Tech Private Limited will be doing so at their own risk.

The Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 along with the Board for Regulation and Supervision of Payment and Settlement Systems Regulations, 2008 and the Payment and Settlement Systems Regulations, 2008 have come into effect from 12th August 2008.

For reference: <https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/PublicationsView.aspx?id=12043>

Source: AIR

Electric vehicle cell launched in Mumbai

- the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation will launch its electric vehicle (EV) cell to bring together government officials, e-mobility experts, and representatives from the electric vehicle industry.
- The EV cell will be placed under the environment department of the municipal corporation.
- Aaditya Thackeray, who is also the guardian minister of Mumbai suburbs launched the cell from Sahyadri Guest House.
- Policy makers will be assisted in the promotion of electric vehicles, build infrastructure for electric vehicle charging in the Mumbai Metropolitan area.
- The move is aimed to provide easy credit facilities for the purchase, implement state-of-the-art technology for in-vehicle batteries, and public transport.

BMC last year launched its first electric vehicle station in the city at Dadar and aims to set up 1,000 EV charging stations in the city in the coming years.

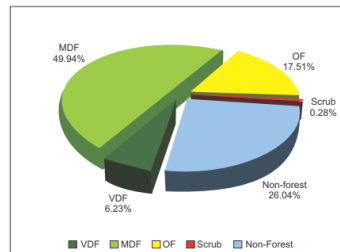
Aditya Thackeray had also announced that the city's BEST bus fleet will convert into EV buses by 2028.

Source: AIR

Compensatory afforestation drive in Agartala

- Agartala Smart City Mission in Tripura has taken up a compensatory afforestation drive to compensate for the ecological loss.
- The ecological loss occurred due to the extraction of adult trees for the under progress smart road project funded by the Asian Development Project.
- To compensate the loss some adult trees have relocated alive under the technical guidance of the Tripura Forest Department.
- under the Asian Development Bank-funded project an initiative has been taken to plant ten trees for one tree extracted.
- The move is aimed to not harm the city's existing green cover in our endeavours to make the city smart.

FIGURE 11.27.1 Forest Cover of Tripura



Note: As per the Forest Survey of India 2019 report the forest cover in Tripura has State has decreased by 0.41 sq km as compared to the previous assessment reported in ISFR 2017.

Source: AIR

Government approves the continuation of National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship (NMMSS) for a period of five years



Why in News

- Government has approved the continuation of Central Sector **National Means-cum-Merit Scholarship (NMMSS)** over the 15th Finance Commission cycle for a period of five years i.e. from 2021-22 to 2025-26 with financial outlay of Rs. 1827.00 crore with minor modifications in eligibility criteria such as increasing income ceiling from Rs.1.5 lakh per annum to Rs.3.5 lakh per annum and revising the renewal criteria under the scheme.

Key Points

About the scheme:

- The objective of the scheme is to award scholarships to meritorious students of economically weaker sections to arrest their drop-out at class VIII and encourage them to continue their education at secondary stage.
- One lakh fresh scholarships of Rs.12,000/- per annum (Rs.1000/- per month) per student are awarded to selected students of class IX every year and their continuation/renewal in classes X to XII for study in State Government, Government-aided and Local body schools under the scheme.
- Scholarships are disbursed directly into the bank accounts of students by electronic transfer through the **Public Financial Management System (PFMS) following DBT mode.**
- This is a continuing scheme and since launch of the scheme in 2008-09, 22.06 lakh scholarships have been sanctioned till 2020-21 involving an expenditure of Rs. 1783.03 crore.

Source: PIB

Important News: Award and Honours

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022



- Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards 2022 was held in Mumbai.

List of main winners:

- Film of the Year – Pushpa: The Rise
- Best Film – Shershaah
- Best Actor – Ranveer Singh
- Best Actress – Kriti Sanon
- Best Director – Ken Ghosh
- Outstanding Contribution To Film Industry – Asha Parekh
- Best International Feature Film – Another Round
- Best Web Series – Candy
- Best Actor in Web Series – Manoj Bajpayee
- Best Actress in Web Series – Raveena Tandon

About Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival Awards:

- The film festival commemorates the notable contribution made by Dadasaheb Phalke.

- Dhundiraj Govind Phalke, popularly known as Dadasaheb Phalke, was an Indian producer-director-screenwriter, known as "the Father of Indian cinema".
- His debut film, Raja Harishchandra, was the first Indian movie released in 1913, and is now known as India's first full-length feature film.

Source: Indian Express

Professor Neena Gupta receives Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians 2021



Why in News

- The **Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians** was awarded to Professor Neena Gupta, a mathematician of the Indian Statistical Institute in Kolkata, in a virtual ceremony on 22nd February 2022.
- She received the award for the year 2021 for her outstanding work in affine algebraic geometry and commutative algebra.

Key Points

About Ramanujan Prize for Young Mathematicians:

- The prize is awarded annually to a researcher from a developing country funded by the Department of Science and Technology (DST) of the Government of India in association with ICTP (International Centre for Theoretical Physics) and the International Mathematical Union (IMU).
- It is given to young mathematicians less than 45 years of age who have conducted outstanding research in a developing country.
- It is given in the memory of Srinivasa Ramanujan, a genius in pure mathematics.

Source: PIB