

Daily Current Affairs 16 January 2024



Important News: National

PM Modi to release ₹540 crore for PM - JANMAN beneficiaries

Why in News:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently released the first installment of ₹540 crore to one lakh beneficiaries of the rural housing scheme under the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN).

Key Points:

- Launch- On Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas (Birth anniversary of Birsa Munda) in Jharkhand.
- Objective- To provide essential amenities such as road and telecom connectivity, electricity, secure housing, clean drinking water, sanitation, and improved access to education, health, nutrition, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.
- Awareness generation- The government will showcase and spread awareness of various government schemes made for the tribals.
- Coordinating role- The scheme will be implemented by 9 ministries with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs playing a key role.
- Beneficiaries- The government has identified 75 tribal communities and primitive tribes with a population of lakhs who reside in more than 22 thousand villages in the country.
- Focus- 11 critical interventions for Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG).

Source: Livemint

ONGC makes back-to-back gas discoveries in Mahanadi basin block

Why in News:

- ONGC has discovered two significant natural gas reserves in the Mahanadi basin block in the Bay of Bengal, marking successful deep-water exploration efforts.



Key Points:

- In a positive development, the state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has discovered two significant natural gas reserves in the Mahanadi basin block in the Bay of Bengal.
- The development has been made in an area that was earlier classified as a 'no-go' area because of national security interests. The first discovery, named Utkal, is in 714 meters of water depth.
- The recent discovery is likely to give an impetus to India's energy security as the country imports nearly half of its gas needs.
- India is aiming to raise the share of natural gas in its energy basket to 15 percent by 2030 from the current 6.3 percent and more domestic production will aid that.
- For a long, natural gas has been seen as a major tool for India to transition from carbon dioxide-emitting fuels to achieve a net zero carbon emission by 2070.
- Natural gas has a lower carbon footprint compared to polluting fossil fuels.
- Natural gas is extracted from below ground or sea surface.
- It is mainly used to generate electricity, make fertilisers, or turn into CNG to use as fuel in automobiles and piped to household kitchens for cooking purposes.
- Key Facts about Mahanadi River is one of the major east-flowing peninsular rivers in India.
- The river originates from the Sihawa range of hills in the Dhamtari district of Chhattisgarh state.
- The Hirakud Dam, the world's longest earthen dam (26km), is constructed across the Mahanadi River, about 15 km from Sambalpur in Odisha.

Source: Livemint

Indian Army Day

Why in News:

- This year's celebration of the 76th Army Day is set to take place in Lucknow, UP.

Key Points:

- Army Day is celebrated on 15 January every year in India, in recognition of Lieutenant General Kodandera M. Cariappa's (later who became Field Marshal) taking over as the first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army



from General Francis Roy Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India, on 15 January 1949.

- The day is celebrated in the form of parades and other military shows in the national capital New Delhi as well as in all headquarters.
- The theme for the 2024 Indian Army Parade is "In Service of the Nation" which resonates deeply with the core values and commitment of the Indian Army.

Source: CNBC

Made-in-Hyderabad BVR Astra Missiles to boost IAF arsenal

Why in News:

- The indigenous Astra air-to-air missiles were ceremoniously launched by Union Minister of State for Defense Ajay Bhatt, marking a significant milestone in their assimilation into the Indian Air Force.

Key Points:

- Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt flagged off the indigenously developed and manufactured Astra Missiles for supply to the Indian Air Force at Bharat Dynamics (BDL), Kanchanbagh Unit.
- Astra is a beyond-visual-range (BVR) air-to-air missile designed to be mounted on fighter aircraft.
- It is indigenously developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and manufactured by Bharat Dynamics Ltd. (BDL) for the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- The missile has a range of 100 plus km.
- The missile is meant to track and take down extremely maneuverable supersonic aircraft.
- "Astra Weapon System is best in its class of weapon systems in the world in the category of air-to-air missiles.

Source: The Times of India



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Operation Sarvashakti Launched by Indian Army

Why in News:

- The Indian Army has launched Operation Sarvashakti in Jammu and Kashmir. Security personnel from both sides of the Pir Panjal range are involved. The aim is to flush out terrorists who have ambushed Indian troops in Rajouri and Poonch.

Key Points:

- The Army has launched Operation Sarvshakti involving security forces from both sides of the Pir Panjal Range in Jammu and Kashmir to flush out terrorists involved in the serial attacks on Indian soldiers in Rajouri and Poonch areas.
- As part of the operation, troops from Srinagar-based 15 Corps and Nagrota-based 16 Corps are working in collaboration with other agencies and paramilitary forces to eliminate Pakistan-sponsored terrorists.
- According to sources, intelligence inputs at all levels are being collated and acted upon. Additional troops from the reserve formations have been moved into the Rajouri-Poonch area.
- The operation will be on the lines of Operation Sarpvishash of 2003, which was launched against terrorists south of the Pir Panjal range. The operation had lasted for roughly three months and nearly 100 terrorists were killed at that time. A large number of stores and equipment, including some medical ones, were recovered.

Source: The Indian Express



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FCI (Food Corporation of India) Marks Its 60th Anniversary

Why in News:

- On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of FCI, Minister Piyush Goyal praised India's food self-sufficiency and called it a historic achievement in human history.

Key Points:

- To improve productivity and quality, Minister Goyal emphasized that FCI should continue to work in a transparent manner and adopt digital technologies. Recognizing its vital role in preserving India's food security, he urged the organization to look for ways to effectively control costs.
- Union Minister for Food, Commerce and Consumer Affairs Piyush Goyal said India's self-reliance in food, which ensures that no citizen in the world's most populous country sleeps hungry, is among the "greatest achievements in human history" is one of.
- The statutory organisation has been critical to maintaining the country's food security, as it buys millions of tonnes of farm produce from farmers at federally fixed minimum support prices (MSP), a process known as procurement. It then redistributes the food to 800 million poor people free of cost under the National Food Security Act. MSP is a floor price to help avoid distress sale by agriculturists.
- In 2022-23, the FCI bought 76.56 million tonnes of paddy and 26.2 million tonnes of wheat from about 12.3 million cultivators, paying them ₹2.19 lakh crore in all.

Source: Hindustan Times

