

## Gaganyaan

### ❖ Context

- Recently, The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), along with the Indian Navy, conducted an important trial for the **Gaganyaan**, human space flight mission.

### ❖ Key Highlights:

- A **Crew Module Recovery Model (CMRM)** was used for the trials.
- CMRM simulates the mass, center of gravity, outer dimensions, and externals of the actual Crew Module at touchdown.
- ISRO's recent operation form the initial recovery trials of Crew Module in a closed pool.
- The safe recovery of the crew is the final step to be accomplished for any successful human spaceflight.
  - It has to be carried out with the minimum lapse of time.
- Different phases of recovery trials starting with the recovery of the Crew Module to the flight crew training are planned at **Water Survival Test Facility (WSTF)**.
- **WSTF**
  - WSTF, Kochi, is a **state-of-the-art facility** of the Indian Navy that provides realistic training of aircrew for escape from a ditched aircraft under varied simulated conditions and crash scenarios.
  - **WSTF** simulates different sea state conditions, environmental conditions, and day/night conditions.

### ❖ Gaganyaan

- Gaganyaan is a **crewed orbital spacecraft** that is **expected to take three astronauts** to space for a **period of seven days**.
- The Gaganyaan schedule is as follows
  - **3 flights** will be launched into orbit.
  - **2 unmanned flights** and **1 human spaceflight**.
- The first trial (uncrewed flight) for Gaganyaan is being planned by the end of 2023 or early 2024.
- This will be followed by sending Vyom Mitra, a humanoid.
- Humans will be sent to space in the third experiment only when the first two experiments assure that the programme is completely ready.
- ISRO's **Geo-Synchronous Launch Vehicle (GSLV)** will be used for the manned space mission.
- The spacecraft will be **placed in a low earth orbit of 300-400 km**.
- **Cost-** Rs.10,000 crore
- If India successfully sends four astronauts to space, it will be only the **fourth nation to do so after the United States, China and Russia**.

## Disinvestment

### ❖ Context

- In the Union Budget for 2023-24, the government has set a **disinvestment target of ₹51,000 crore**.

### ❖ Key Highlights:

- It is **down nearly 21% from the budget estimate** for the current year and just **₹1,000 crore more than the revised estimate**.
- It is also the **lowest target in seven years**.

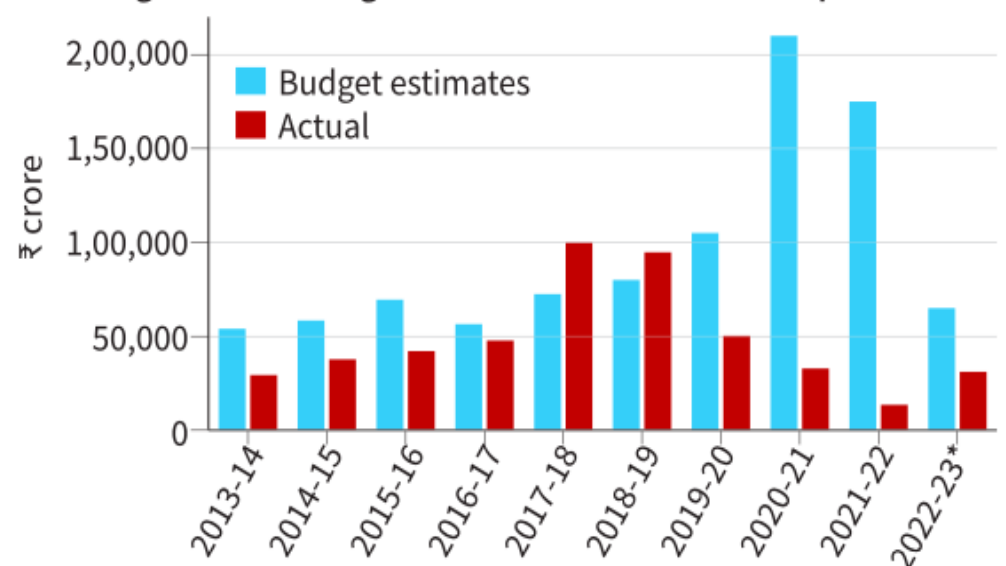
### ❖ About Disinvestment:

- Disinvestment or divestment, in this context, is when the **government sells its assets or a subsidiary**, such as a Central or State public sector enterprise.
- There are three main approaches to disinvestment
  - **Minority Disinvestment**
    - The government retains a majority in the company, typically greater than 51%, thus ensuring management control.
  - **Majority Disinvestment**
    - The government **hands over control to the acquiring entity** but retains some stake.
  - **Complete Privatisation**
    - 100% control of the company is passed on to the buyer.
- **Concerned Department**
  - The Union **Finance Ministry** has a separate department for undertaking disinvestment-related procedures called the **Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)**.

### • Purpose of Disinvestment

- The government may disinvest in order to reduce the fiscal burden or bridge the revenue shortfall for that year.
- It also uses disinvestment proceeds **to finance the fiscal deficit**, to invest in the economy and development or **social sector programmes**, and to retire government debt.
- Disinvestment also encourages private ownership of assets and trading in the open market.
- If successful, it also means that the government does not have to fund the losses of a loss-making unit anymore.

The budget estimates against the actual realisation of proceeds



## Face to Face Centres



**‘Victory City’**

❖ **Context**

➤ **Salman Rushdie’s latest work, “Victory City”** is a fictionalised telling of the story of Vijayanagara, one of the richest and most powerful kingdoms in medieval India.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

• Salman Rushdie’s latest novel, **“Victory City”** is a fictionalised telling of the story of the Vijayanagara Kingdom, narrated by a sorceress and poet named **Pampa Kampana**, who, over more than two centuries, witnessed Vijayanagara’s many victories and defeats.

❖ **The Vijayanagara Kingdom:**

• **Founded by Harihara I of the Sangama dynasty**, Vijayanagara expanded from a strategic position on the banks of the **Tungabhadra River**. By the 15th century, it had become a force to reckon with.

• The kingdom reached its peak under **Krishna Deva Raya (reign 1509-1529)**, a period in which it enjoyed military superiority to its rival kingdoms such as the **Bahmani Sultanate, the Golconda Sultanate and the Gajapatis of Odisha**.

• The Vijayanagara kingdom has long been a subject of historical and political interest.

• **Founded in 1336**, the kingdom of Vijayanagara lasted for more than three centuries, a period in which it withstood multiple political stresses, and saw significant advances in art and economy.

• It was one of the **most powerful kingdoms** in the sub-continent. The kings of Vijayanagara at the peak of their power ruled over a territory of more than **360,000 sq. km**.

• At its peak, the kingdom stretched from **Goa in the Konkan coast to parts of southern Odisha** in the east and all the way to the very tip of the subcontinent in the south.

❖ **The Foundations Of The Kingdom Rested On Its Thriving Trade And A Monetised Economy:**

• While the economy of the kingdom was largely dependent on agriculture, trade thrived in its many ports on either coast.

• **Traveler Abd al-Razzaq Samarqandi** chronicled how “the ports of Mangalore, Honavar, Bhatkal, Barkur, Cochin, Cannanore, Machilipatnam, and Dharmadam saw traders from Africa, Arabia, Aden, the Red sea, China and Bengal and also served as ship building centres”

• **The empire’s principal exports** were pepper, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, myrobalan, tamarind timber, anafistula, precious and semi-precious stones, pearls, musk, ambergris, rhubarb, aloe, cotton cloth and porcelain.

• In his classic History of South India, K A Nilakanta Sastri wrote that **coins were minted by the state** as well as by merchant guilds using gold, silver, copper and brass, and their value depended on material weight.

❖ **Vijayanagara’s Contributions To Culture and Architecture:**

• **This was a period when poetry** and scholarship flourished, both in sacral and secular contexts. Literature in Tamil, Telugu, Kannada as well as Sanskrit was produced in the kingdom, with new writing styles and methods emerging.

• **Vijayanagara architecture** is “a vibrant combination and blossoming of the **Chalukya, Hoysala, Pandya and Chola styles**, idioms that prospered in previous centuries.”

• Vijayanagara’s capital **Hampi is a UNESCO World Heritage Site today**, known for its sophisticated fortifications as well as innumerable temples and other architectural marvels.

**News in Between the Lines**

**PM Poshan Scheme**



❖ **Context**

➤ Recently, the Education Ministry requested CAG for a Special Audit of implementation of PM Poshan Scheme in the State of West Bengal for the last three financial years.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- Ministry of Education has received reports about alleged misuse of funds in West Bengal under the PM Poshan Scheme.
- This Audit will encompass compliance, performance & financial audit.

**PM Poshan Scheme**

- The current version of the programme, **renamed PM Poshan Shakti Nirman or PM Poshan in 2021**.
- It was **launched in 1995**
- **Scheme Type-** Centrally Sponsored
- **Nodal Ministry-** Ministry of Education
- **Students up to Class VIII** are guaranteed one nutritional cooked meal at least 200 days in a year.
- Initially it was launched for students up to Class 5.
  - In 2007, the UPA government expanded it to Class 8.
- The **scheme covers 11.80 crore children** across Classes 1 to 8 (age group 6 to 14) in 11.20 lakh government and government-aided schools.
- It is a **legal entitlement** of all school-going children in primary and upper primary classes, through the **NFSA, 2013**, as well as the **Supreme Court’s ruling**.
- The primary objective of the scheme is to improve the nutritional status of children studying in classes I-VIII in eligible schools.

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## Northern Ireland Protocol



### ❖ Context

➤ Recently, The United Kingdom Supreme Court ruled that the **Northern Ireland Protocol is lawful**

### ❖ Key Highlights:

- **About** : Northern Ireland Protocol is a **post-Brexit agreement** that created a trade border between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.
- **Background** :
  - After Brexit, **Northern Ireland remained the UK's only constituent** that shared a land border with an EU member, the Republic of Ireland.
  - EU and UK having different product standards, checks would be necessary before goods could move from Northern Ireland to Ireland.
  - However, the two sides have had a long history of conflict, with a hard-fought peace secured only in 1998 under the **Belfast Agreement, also called the Good Friday agreement**.
  - Fiddling with this border was thus considered too dangerous, and it was decided the checks would be conducted between Northern Ireland and Great Britain.
  - This was called the Northern Ireland Protocol.
- **Significance** : Under the protocol, **Northern Ireland remains in the EU single market**, and trade-and-customs inspections of goods coming from Great Britain take place at its ports along the Irish Sea.

## ODO P - DEH



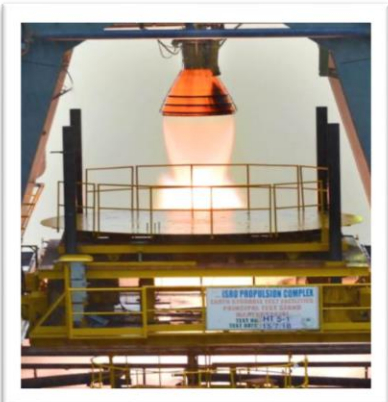
### ❖ Context

➤ Under the **ODOP- Districts as Export Hubs initiative**, products with export potential have been identified from all 765 districts of the country.

### ❖ About ODOP – DEH:

- **ODOP – DEH is not a scheme but rather** an initiative aimed at fostering balanced regional development across all districts of the country.
- The idea is to select, brand, and promote one product from each district (of the country for **enabling holistic socioeconomic growth** across all regions.
- **ODOP has been merged with 'Districts as Export Hubs Initiative'** being run by the Department of Commerce (DoC) with Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) as a major stakeholder.
- **DEH Initiative highlights** the need to channelize the potential and diverse identity in each district of the country to make them export hubs.
- As ODOP-Districts as Export Hubs is **not a scheme, there is no financial assistance provided**.

## Vikas Engine



### ❖ Context

➤ The Indian Space Research Organisation has successfully tested the throttling of Vikas, its workhorse launch-vehicle engine.

### ❖ Key Highlights:

- The throttling test was done toward **enabling booster-stage recovery in future launch vehicle configurations**.

### ❖ About Vikas Engine:

- Vikas **belongs to a family of liquid fuelled rocket engines** conceptualized and designed by ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre in the 1970s.
- The Vikas engine powers the 2nd stages of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV), the liquid strap-ons of GSLV and the core liquid stage of LVM3 (Launch Vehicle Mark III).

The Vikas engine is aimed at improving the payload capability of PSLV, GSLV and GSLV Mk-III launch vehicles



• Vikas is a family of liquid fuelled rocket engines

- **Utility:** The engine is the workhorse liquid rocket engine powering the second stage of India's PSLV; second stage and the four strap-on stages of GSLV ; and twin engine core liquid stage (L110) of GSLV Mk-III
- **Performance:**  
Thrust 800 kN,  
Specific impulse: 290 seconds
- **Dimension**  
Length 3.70 m (12.1 feet)
- **Liquid-fuel engine:**  
Propellant: N<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub>
- **Cycle:** Gas generator

## Judicial Process in Local Languages

### ❖ Context

➤ **Union Minister of Law & Justice** in a written reply in Rajya Sabha informed about Judicial Process in Local Languages.

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❖ **Judicial Process in Local Languages:**

- **Article 348(1) (a) of the Constitution of India** states that all proceedings in the **Supreme Court** and in every **High Court (HC)**, shall be in English language.
- Clause (2) of the Article 348 of the Constitution states that notwithstanding anything in sub-clause (a) of clause (1), the **Governor of a State may**, with the previous consent of the President, authorize the use of **Hindi Language, or any other language** used for any official purposes of the State, in proceedings in the High Court having its principal seat in that State.
- **The Cabinet Committee's decision** dated 21.05.1965 has stipulated that **consent of the Hon'ble Chief Justice of India** be obtained on any proposal relating to use of a language other than English in the High Court.

• **Under Article 235** of the Constitution of India, the administrative control over the district and subordinate judiciary in the States vest with the **concerned High Court**.

• As regards, use of Hindi or regional language in lower courts, it is decided by the **High Court and State Government concerned in consultation with each other**.

**Designated Survivor**



❖ **Context**

- Biden's government Labor Secretary Marty Walsh was given the duty of being the **Designated Survivor** when he was delivering the annual State of the Union Address.

❖ **About Designated Survivor:**

- Though extremely unlikely, there is a theoretical possibility of a catastrophic disaster striking the venue of the State of the Union Address, which is attended by nearly every top official and judge.
- **The purpose of having a designated survivor** is to ensure continuity of government in such an eventuality.
- **To be a designated survivor**, one must be eligible to become United States' President. If a higher ranking official survives the attack, the designated survivor gives way to them when they are fit to lead.

➤ According to the National Constitution Center, **the tradition of appointing a designated survivor began in the 1950s**, as the specter of a nuclear holocaust loomed amidst the Cold War with the USSR. However, the US government did not publicly acknowledge the existence of the figure till 1981, Presidential inaugurations & congressional joint sessions have also used designated survivors, according to the **National Constitution Center**.

**Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM)**



❖ **Context**

- The indigenous **Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM)** is set to be tested again in April with some changes suggested by the Army.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- It is being developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- The QRSAM is designed to operate on the move with search and track capability and fire on short halt, a requirement for the Army's Air Defence to move along with offensive formations.
- **Its Range is 25-30 KM and propelled by Single Stage Solid Rocket Motor.**
- It can **engage 6 targets simultaneously**.

**Shree Ann**



❖ **Context**

- Prime Minister **appreciated Lahari Bai**, who has shown remarkable enthusiasm towards **Shree Ann**.

❖ **Key Highlights:**

- **Lahari Bai is a 27-year-old tribal woman** from Madhya Pradesh's Dindori, known for preserving more than **150 rare millet varieties** through its seeds.
- **Also called Shree Ann**, millets have come to the forefront as part of India and the world observing 2023 as the International Year of Millets.
- Recognising her passion for preserving the rare millet seeds, **her name has been forwarded by the village head for scholarship** to ICAR-Vivekananda Parvatiya Krishi Anusandhan Sansthan, Jodhpur.
- Millet is a common term to categorise small-seeded grasses that are often termed nutri-cereals or dryland-cereals, and includes **Sorghum, Pearl Millet, Foxtail Millet, Ragi, Proso Millet, Barnyard Millet And Kodo Millet**, among others.
- Millets need a **third of the water required by rice**. "They are hardy grains that can withstand long periods of drought and require little pesticides or fertilisers to thrive, truly making them super grains."

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